

THE
SOULES
CONFLICT
with it selfe,
AND VICTORY
over it selfe by Faith.

A Treatise of the inward disqui-
ments of distressed spirits, with
comfortable remedies to establish
them.

*Returne unto thy rest O my soule, for the
Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

By R. Sibbs D. D. Master of
Magdalene Hall in Cambridge, and
Preacher of Grayes Inn London.

The fourth Edition.

L O N D O N.
Printed for R. D. and are to be sold
by John Williams, at the sign of the
Crown in S. Pauls Church-yard,
1685.

Sept 1671

TO
THE RIGHT
WORSHIPFULL

SIR JOHN BANKS Knight, the Kings
Majesties Attourney Generall,

SIR EDWARD MOSELY Knight, His
Majesties Attourney of the Du-
chie,

SIR WILLIAM DENNY Knight, one
of the Kings learned Counsell,

SIR DUDLY DIGGES Knight, one of
the Masters of the Chauncery,
and the rest of the Worshipful Rea-

ders and Benchers, with the *Aunci-
ents, Barresters, Students,* and all o-
thers belonging to the Honour-
able Society of *Graves-Inne.*

E. SIBBES Dedicateth these Sermons
Preached amongst them, in testimony of his
due Observance, and desire of their spirituall
and eternall good.

Thomas Chertsey

born May 10

about 10

in the 10

at 10

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To the Christian Reader.

THere be two sorts of people: *alwaies in the visible Church;* One that Satan keeps under with false peace, whose life is nothing but a diversion to present contentments, and a turning away from God and their owne hearts; which they know can speak no good unto them; these speak peace to themselves, but God speaks none. Such have nothing to doe with this *Scripture*; the way for these men to enjoy comfort, is to be soundly troubled. True peace arises from knowing the worst first, and then our freedome from it. It is miserable peace that riseth from ignorance of evil. *The Angel troubled the waters,* and then cured those that steep in. It is Christs manner to trouble our soules first, and then to come with healing in his wings.

John 1.

But there is another sort of people, who being drawn out of Satans kingdome, and within the Covenant of grace, whom Satan labours to unsettle and disquiet: being the god of the world, he is vexed to see them in the world, wak above the world. Since he cannot hinder their estate, he will trouble their peace, and damp their spirits; and cut asunder the sinews of all their endeavours. These should take themselves to tasks as David doth here, and labour to maintaine their portion, and the glory of a Christian profession. For whatsoever is in God, or comes from God, is for their comfort. *Himself is the God of comfort*; his Spirit most known by that office. Our blessed Saviour was so carefull that his Disciples should not be too much dejected, that he forgot his owne bitter passion to comfort them, whom yet he knew would all forsake him. *Let not your hearts be troubled,* saith he. And his own soule was troubled to death, that we should not be troubled. *Trub assever is written in written for this end*; every article of faith hath a speciall influence, in comforting a believing soule. They are not onely food, but cordials. Yea, he put himself to his death, that we might not onely have consolation, but strong consolation. The Sacraments scale unto us all the comforts we have by the death of

TO THE CHRISTIAN

Christ; the exercise of Religion, as Prayer, Hearing, Reading, &c. in that *joy may be full*: the Communion of Saints is chiefly ordained to comfort the feeble minded, and to strengthen the weak. Gods government of his Church tends to this. Why doth he sweeten our pilgrimages, and let us see so many comfortable daies in the world, but that we should serve him with cheerfull and good hearts? As for troubles, he doth but cast us downe, to raise us up, and empty us that he may fill us, and melt us that we may be vessels of glory, loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while. *We are troubled, but not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken.* If we consider from what tribulation afflictions come, how they are not only moderated, but sweetened and sanctified in the issue to us, how can it be a minister matter of comfort in the greatest sleeping discomforts? How alien can we let the rines of our afflictions loose to sorrow without being injurious to God and his providence? as if we would teach him how to govern his Church.

2 Cor. 4-8.

2nd

What unthankfullness is it to forget our consolation, and to look onely upon matter of grievance? to think too much upon two or three crosses, and to forget a hundred blessings? To take poison out of that, from which we should suck honey. What folly is it to straiten and darken our owne spirits? and intillpose our selves from doing or taking good? A link out of joynt can doe nothing with our deformity and paine; dejection takes off the wheels of the soule.

Of all other, Satan hath most advantage of discontented persons, as most agreeable to his disposition, being the most discontented creature under heaven; He diminishes all his dark plots in their braines. The discontentment of the Ishmaelites in the wilderness, provoked God to smite, that they should never enter into the rest. There is another spirit in my servant Chab, saith God, the spirit of Gods people is an encouraging spirit. Wisdom teaches them if they feel any grievances to conceal them from others that are weaker, lest they be dishonoured. God threatens it as a curse to give a trembling heart, and sorrow

Pl. 5. ult.

Deu. 28. 65

of minds: whereas on the contrary joy is as oyle to the soule: it makes duties come off cheerfully and sweetly from our selues graciously to others, and acceptably to God. A Prince cannot endure it in his subjects, nor a Father in his children to be lowring at their presence. Such usually have stollen waters to delight themselves in.

How many are there that upon the disgrace that followes Religion, are frighted from it? But what are discouragements, to the encouragements Religion brings with it? which are such as the very Angels themselves admire at. Religion indeed brings crosses with it; but then it brings comforts above those crosses. What a dishonour is it to Religion to conceiue that God will not maintaine and honour his followers? as if his service were not the best service. What a shame is it for an heire of heauen to be cast down for every petty losse and crosse? To be afraid of a man whose breath is in his nostrils, in not standing in a good cause, when we are sure God will stand by us, assisting and comforting us, whose presence is able to make the greatest torments sweet?

My discourse tends not to take men off from all grief and mourning. Light for the righteous is shewn in sorrow. Our state of absence from the Lord, and living here in a vail of teares, our daily infirmities, and our sympathy with others, requires it; and where most grace is there is most sensibleness, as in Christ. But we must distinguish between grief, and that sullenness and dejection of spirit, which is with a repining and taking off from duty; when Joshua was so much cast downe at Israels turning their backs before their enemies, God reproves him, Get thee up Joshua: rally thee upon thy face.

Some would have men after the committing of grosse sinnes to be presently comfortable, and believe without humbling themselves at all; indeed when we are once in Christ, we ought not to question our state in him; and if we do, it comes not from the Spirit. But yet a guilty conscience will be clamorous and full of objections, and God will not speak peace unto it till it be humbled. God will let his best children know what it is to be too bold with sinne, as we see in David and Peter, who felt

*Tua presentia Domine,
Laurentio
ipsam crucis
secula dulcem fecit.*

Judg 7.10.

TO THE CHRISTIAN

felt no peace till they had renewed their repentance: The way to rejoyce with joy unspeakable and glorious, is to stirre up fights that cannot be mitered. And it is so farre, that the knowledge of our state in grace should not humble us, that very ingenuity considering Gods love to us, out of the nature of the thing it selfe works sorrow and shame in us, to offend his Majestie.

2 Pet. 10.

One maine stop that hinders Christians from rejoycing, is, that they give themselves too much liberty to question their grounds of comfort and interest in the promises. This is wonderfull comfortable say they, but what is it to me? the promise belongs not to me. This ariseth from want of giving all diligence to make their calling sure to themselves. In watchfulnesse and diligence we sootier meet with comfort then in idle complaining. Our care therefore should be to get sound evidence of a good estate, and then likewise to keep our evidence cleare; wherein we are not to hearken to our own feares and doubts, or the suggestion of our enemy, who studies to falsifie our evidence: but to the word, and our owne consciences enlightened by the Spirit: and then it is pride and pettishnesse to stand out against comfort to themselves. Christians should study to corroborate their title; We are never more in heaven, before we come thither, then when we can read our evidences: It makes us converse much with God, it sweetens all conditions, and makes us willing to doe and suffer any thing. It makes us have comfortable and honourable thoughts of our selves, as too good for the service of any base lust, and brings confidence in God both in life and death.

But what if our condition be so darke, that we cannot read our evidence at all?

Here look up to Gods infinite mercy in Christ, as we did at the first when we found no goodness in our selves, and that is the way to recover what ever we think we have lost. By honouring Gods mercy in Christ, we come to have the Spirit of Christ; therefore when the waters of sanctification are troubled and muddy, let us run to the wellspring of blood. God seems to walke sometimes contrary to himself; he seems to discourage, when secretly

he

he doth encourage, as the *women of Canaan*; but faith can finde out these wales of God, and untie these knots, by looking to the free promise and mercifull nature of God. Let our fowth and rebellious flesh murmur as much as it will, *who art thou? and what is thy worth?* Yet a Christian knows whom he believes. Faith hath learned to set God against all.

Againe, we must goe on to *adde grace to grace*. A growing and fruitfull Christian, is alwaies a comfortable Christian; the oyle of *grace* brings forth the oyle of *gladnesse*. Christ is first a King of *righteousnesse*, and then a King of *peace*; the righteousness that he works by his Spirit brings a peace of *sanctification*, whereby though we are not freed from sinne, yet we are enabled to combat with it, and to get the victory over it. Some degree of comfort follows every good action, as heat accompanies fire, and as beams and influences issue from the *Sun*; which is so true, that very *Heathens* upon the discharge of a good conscience, have found comfort and peace answerable; this is a reward before our reward.

Another thing that hinders the comfort of Christians is, that they forget what a gracious and mercifull covenant they live under, wherein the perfection that is required is to be found in Christ. Perfection in us is sincerity: What is the end of faith but to bring us to Christ? Now imperfect faith, if sincere, knits to Christ, in whom our perfection lies.

Gods designe in the covenant of grace is to exalt the riches of his mercy, above all sinne and unworthinesse of man; and we yeild him more glory of his mercy by believing, then it would be to his justice to destroy us. If we were perfect in our selves, we should not honour him so much, as when we labour to be found in Christ, having his righteousness upon us.

There is no one portion of Scripture oftner used to fetch up drooping spirits than this, *why art thou cast down & my soule?* It is figurative, and full of Rhetorique, and all little enough to perswade the perplexed soule quietly to *trust in God*; which without this retring into our selves and checking our hearts, will never be brought to passe.

Chrysostome

Heb. 7. 2.

Premium
ante premium.

TO THE CHRISTIAN

*Hamil. in
Gen.*

Chrystome brings in a man loaden with troubles, coming into the Church, where when he heard this passage read, he presently recovered himself, and becomes another man. As *David* therefore did acquaint himself with this forme of dealing with his soule, so let us, demanding a reason of our selves, why we are cast down, which will at leaste bucke and put a stop to the distresse, and make us fit to consider more solid grounds of true comfort.

Of necessity the soule must be something calmed and staid before it can be comforted. Whilst the humours of the body rage in a great distemper, there is no giving of physick: So when the soule gives way to passion, it is unfit to entertaine any counsell, therefore it must be stilled by degrees, that it may heare reason; and sometimes it is fitter to be moved with ordinary reasons, (as being more familiar unto it) then with higher reasons fetched from our supernaturall condition in *Christ*, as from the condition of mans nature subject to changes, from the uncomeliness of yielding to passion for that, which it is not in our power to mend, &c. these and such like reasons have some use to stay the sinner a while, but they leave the soule untouched, which is *fine*, the trouble of all troubles. Yet when such considerations are made spiritual by faith on higher grounds, they have some operation upon the soule, as the influence of the *Sun* having the stronger influence of the *Sun* mingled with it becomes more effectual upon these inferiour bodies, so can the light being ready at hand, is sometimes as usefull as the *Sun* is felt when his light is not hid.

But our maine care should be to have Evangelicall grounds of comfort, here to our reconciliation with God, whereby all things else are reconciled to us, Adoption and Communion with *Christ*, &c. which is never sweeter than under the Crosse. *Philip Landgrave* of Hesse, being a long time prisoner under *Charles the first*, was demanded what upheld him all that time? who answered, that he felt the divine comforts of the *Martyrs*, which he did his comfort, which are felt under the Crosse, and not before times.

Besides personall troubles, there are many much degraded with the present state of the Church, seeing the blood

*Respondit,
divinas con-
solationes
Martyrum
se sentire.*

of

READER

of so many Saines to be shed, and the enemies oft to pre-
 valle; but God hath stratagems, as *Joshua*, at *Al*; he
 seems sometime to retire that he may come upon his
 enemies with the greater advantage; the end of all these
 troubles will no doubt be the ruine of the Antichristian
 faction; and we shall see the Church in her more perfect
 beauty; when the enemies shall be in that place which is
 fittest for them, the *lowest*, that is, the *footstool of Christ*; the
 Church as it is highest in the favour of God, so it
 shall be the highest in it self. *The mountains of the Lord*
shall be exalted above all mountains. In the worst condi-
 tion, the Church hath two faces, one towards heaven and
 Christ, which is alwaies constant and glorious: another
 toward the world, which is in appearance contemptible
 and changeable. But God will in the end give her beauty
 for ashes, and glory double to her shame: and she shall
 in the end prevaile: In the meane time, the power of the
 enemies is in Gods hand: The Church of God conquers
 when it is conquered; even as our Head Christ did, who
 overcame by patience as well as by power. Christs vi-
 ctory was upon the Crosse. The Spirit of a Christian con-
 quers, when his person is conquered.

The way is, in stead of discouragement, to search all
 the promises made to the Church in these latter times,
 and to turne them into prayers, and presse God earnestly
 for the performance of them. Then we shall soon finde
 God both *casting* his enemies, and *bleſsing* his people out
 of *Zion*, by the faithfull prayers that ascend up from
 thence.

In all the *promises* we should have speciall recourse to
 God in them. In all storms there is Sea-room enough
 in the infinite goodnesse of God, for faith to be carried
 with full saile.

And it must be remembered that in all places where
 God is mentioned, we are to understand God in the pro-
 mised *Messiah*, typified out so many waies unto us. And
 to put the more vigour into such places in the reading of
 them, we in this latter age of the Church must thinke of
 God shining upon us in the face of Christ, and our Father
 inqum. If they had so much confidence in so little light,
 it

*Robur ho-
 stium apud
 Deum.*

TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

it is a shame for us not to be confident in good things, when so strong a light shines round about us : when we profess we believe a *crowne of righteousness* is laid up for all those that love his appearing. Presenting these things to the soule by faith, setteth the soule in such a pitch of resolution, that no discouragements are able to seize upon it, we faint not, saith Saint Paul : wherefore doth he not faint ? because these light and short afflictions procure an exceeding weight of glory.

Luther when he saw Melancthon a godly and learned man too much dejected for the state of the Church in those times, falls a chiding of him, as David doth here his owne soule, I strongly hate those miserable cares, saith he, whereby thou wast thou art even spent. It is not the greatness of the cause, but the greatness of our incredulity. If the cause be false, let us revoke it. If true, why doe we make God in his rich promises a liar ? Strike against thy selfe, the greatest enemy ; why doe we feare the conquered world, that have the conquerer himself on our side ?

Now to speake something concerning the publishing of this Treatise. I began to preach on the Text about twelve yeares since in the City, and afterwards finished the same at *Graves-Inne*. After which, some having gotten imperfect Notes, endeavoured to publish them without my privy. Therefore to doe my self right, I thought fit to reduce them to this forme. There is a pious and studious Gentleman of *Graves-Inne*, that hath of late published Observations upon the whole *Psalme* ; and another upon this very *Pse* very well : And many others by Treatises of Faith and such like, have furthered the spiritual peace of Christians much. It were to be wished that we would all joyne to doe that which the Apostle gloried in, *to be helpers of the joy of Gods people*. By reason of my absence, while the work was in printing, some sentences were mistaken. Some will be ready to deprave the labours of other men ; but, so good may be done, let such ill disposed persons be what they are, and what they will be unlesse God turne their hearts : and so I commend thee and this poore Treatise to Gods blessing.

GRAVES-INNE,

July 1. 1635.

R. SIBBE.

*Ego miserrimus coram
omnibus te con
fiteri scri
bis, vehemen
ter odi Quod
sic regnas in
corde tuo non
est magnitu
tudo cause,
sed magnitu
do increduli
tatis nostre.
Si causa falsu
m est, revoca
mus Si vera,
cur facimus
illam tantis
promissis men
darem? Lu
thare contra
seipsum ma
ximum bo
nem.*

a Cor. 1.
plc.

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IN OPUS POSTHUMUM
 ADMODUM REVERENDI,

mihiq; multis Nominibus colendi,
 RICHARDI SIBBS, S. T. Professoris,
 Aulae S^{tae} Cath. Praefecti digniss^m.

Vide Liber, pie Dux Anima, pie Mentis Achates,
 Te relegens Fructu ne poramento legat.
 Quam felix prodix! Pre sacro Codice sordet,
 Bartole, siue tui; siue, Gallene, tui.

Fidas Pecco DEI, celestis Cultor Agelli
 Affili Pretium grande Laboris habet:
 Quo Tibi nec Vita melior, nec proprior Ore,
 Gratior aut Vultu, nec sua Arte prior.

Nil opus ut Nardum Caro combibat uncta Sabalum,
 Alia ve marmoreus Sydera tangat Apex:
 Non eget Hic Urna, non Marmore; nempe Volumen
 Stat Sacrum, vivax Marmor, & Urna, P i o.

Qui CHRISTO vivens incessit Frangere Caeli,
 Ethereumque obiit Munus; obire nequit:
 Ducit Hic Angelicis aequalia sacula Lustris;
 Qui VERBO Studium contulit omne suum.

Perlegat

*Perlegat Hunc Legum Cultrix Veneranda Senectus,
Es quos plena Deo Mens super Astra volat:
Venduntur (quanti!) circum Palatia Fumi!
Hic facit ALTARIS CARBO mactatus Orit?*

*Hen! Pietas ubi prisca? profana o Tempora! Mundi
Fax! Vesper! prope nox! o Mora! CHRISTE quoni.
Si valere Preces unquam, o Custodia Christi.
Nunc opus est Precibus, nunc Ope, CHRISTE, tu.*

*Certe in humanis Vitiis Infamia rebus
Hei mihi! nulla novis, sufficit Verba Malis?
Probra referre pudet; nec enim decet: Exprobrat illa
Qui volet; Est nostrum flere, glendo queri.*

*Flere? Tonabo tuas, Pietas neglecta, Quereas
Quid non Schisma, Tepor, Fastus, o Alia, gerat?
Adde Sed Historicus, LACRUS tuis optinus. Homo
Addam Sphaeram ad Musica macta place.*

EDMUND BENTLEY

Cressinge Templariorum

Prin. Cal. Febr.

MDCXXXV.

On the Work of my learned Friend

DOCTOR SIBBS.

Foole that I was I to think my easie Pen
Had strength enough to glorifie the fame
Of this known Author, this rare Man of men;
Or give the least advantage to his name. (bright,
Who think, by praise, to make his name more
Show the Suns Glory, by dull Candle-light.

Blest Saint I thy hallow'd Pages doe require
No slight preferment from our slender Layes:
We stand amaz'd, at what we most admire:
Ah what are Saints the better for our praise!
He that commends this Volume, does no more
Then warme the fire, or gild the massie Ore.

Let me stand silent then. O, may that Spirit,
Which led thy hand, direct mine eye, my brest;
That I may read, and doe; and so inherit
(What thou enjoy'st, and taught) eternall Rest!
Foole that I was I to think my Lines could give
Life to that work, by which they hope to live.

FRA: QUAE

THE SOULES

Conflict with it Selfe.

Psalm XLII.

Why art thou cast down O my soule, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shal yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

THese Psalms are, (as it were) the Anatomy of a holy man, which lay the inside of a truly devout man outward to the view of others. If the Scriptures be compared to a body, the Psalms may well be the heart, they are so full of sweet affections, and passions. For in other portions of Scripture God speaks to us; but in the Psalms holy men speak to God and their own hearts: as

In this Psalme, we have the passionate passages of a broken and a troubled spirit.

At this time *David* was a banished man, banished from his own house, from his friends, & which troubled him most, from the house of God, upon occasion of *Saul's* persecution, who hunted him as a Partridge upon the mountains. See how this works upon him.

1.

Verse 1.

1. *He layes open his desire springing from his love.* Love being the prime and leading affection of the soul from whence grief springs, from being crossed in that we love. For the setting out of which his affection to the full, he borroweth an expression from the Hart; no Hart being chased by the hunters, *panteth more after the water*, then my heart doth after thee O God: though he found God present with him in exile, yet there is a sweeter presence of him in his ordinances which he wanted and took to heart: places and conditions are happy or miserable, as God vouchsafeth his gracious presence more or lesse, and therefore, *When, O when shall it be, that I appear before God?*

2.

2. Then after his strong desire, he lays out his grief, which he could not contain, but must needs give a vent to it in tears: and he had such a spring of grief in him,

as fedde his teares day and night; all the ease he found was to dissolve this cloud of grief into the showre of teares.

Verse 2.

But, *why gives he this way to his griefe?*

Quest.

Because together with his exiling from Gods house, he was upbrayded by his enemies, with his religion: *where is now thy God?* Grievances come not alone, but (as *Jobs* messengers) follow one another.

Ans.

These bitter taunts, together with the remembrance of his former happinesse in communion with God in his house, made deep impressions in his soule, when he remembered how he went with the multitude into the house of God, and led a goodly train with him, being willing as a good Magistrate, and Master of a familie, not to goe to the house of God alone, nor to heaven alone, but to carry as many as he could with him; Oh! the remembrance of this made him powre forth (not his words or his teares onely, but) his very soule. Former favours and happinesse makes the soul more sensible of all impressions to the contrary; hereupon finding his soul over sensible, he expostulates with himself, *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?* &c.

Verse 3.

Verse 4.

Cap. V

Verse 7.

Verse 8.

Verse 10.

Obfer. I

But though the remembrance of the former sweetnesse of Gods presence did somewhat stay him, yet his grief would not so be stilled, and therefore it gathers upon him again; *one grief called upon another*, as one deep wave follows another without intermission, untill his soul was almost over-whelmed under these waters; yet he recovers himself a little with looking up to God, who he expected would with speed and authority send forth *his loving kindnesse* with command to raise him up and comfort him, and give him matter of *songs in the night*. For all this, his unruly griefe will not be calmed, but renues assaults upon the return of the reproach of his enemies. Their words were *as swords* unto him, and his heart being made very tender and sensible of griefe, these sharp words enter too deep; & thereupon he hath recourse to his former remedy (as being the most tryed) to chide his soul, and charge it to trust in God.

CAP. I.

Generall Observations upon the Text.

Hence in generall we may observe, that *Grief gathered to a head will not be quieted*

The Soules Conflict.

5

quieted at the first. We see here passions intermingled with comforts, and comforts with passions, and what bustling there is, before *David* can get the victory over his own heart: You have some short spirited Christians, that if they be not comforted at the first, they think all labour with their hearts is in vain, and thereupon give way to their grief. But we see in *David*; as distemper ariseth upon distemper, so he gives check upon check, and charge upon charge to his soul, untill at length he brought it to a quiet temper. In Physick if one purge will not carry away the vicious humour, then we add a second; if that will not do it, we take a third. So should we deale with our souls, perhaps, one check, one charge will not do it, then fall upon the soul again; send it to God again, and never give over until our souls be possessed of our souls again.

Againe, In generall observe in *David's* Spirit, that a gracious and living soul is most sensible of the want of spiritual meanes.

The reason is, because spirituall life hath answerable taste, and hunger and thirst after spirituall helps.

Cap. 1.

Obser. 2

Reason.

We

Cap. 1.
*Actus ur-
 gent quæ
 necessitat is
 sunt, quam
 quæ spe-
 ctant ad
 voluntatem.*

We see in nature, that those things presse hardest upon it, that touch upon the necessities of nature, rather than those that touch upon delights, for these further only our comfortable being; but necessities uphold our being it self: we see how famine wrought upon the Patriarchs to go into Egypt: Where we may see what to judge of those who willingly excommunicate themselves from the assemblies of Gods people, where the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are present, where the prayers of holy men meet together in one, and as it were bind God and pull down Gods blessing. No private devotion hath that report of acceptance from heaven.

Obser. 3.

A third general point is, that a godly soul by reason of the life of grace, knows when it is well with it, and when it is ill, when it is a good day with it, and when a bad, when God shines in the use of meanes, then the soul is as it were in heaven; when God withdraws himself, then it is in darknesse for a time. Where there is but only a principle of nature without sanctifying grace, there men go plodding on and keep their rounds, and are at the end where they were at the beginning, not troubled with changes,

ges, because there is nothing within to be troubled; and therefore, dead means, quick means, or no means, all is one with them, an argument of a dead soul. And so we come more particularly and directly to the words. *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? &c.*

The words imply, 1 *David's state* wherein he was, and 2 *expresse his carriage* in that state.

Parts.

His state was such that in regard of outward condition, he was in variety of troubles; and that in regard of inward disposition of spirit, he was first *cast down*, and then *disquieted*.

1.

Now for his carriage of himself in this condition, and disposition, hee dealeth roundly with himself: *David* reasoneth the case with *David*, and first checketh himself for being too much *cast down*, and then for being too much *disquieted*.

2.

And then layeth a charge upon himself *to trust in God*; wherein we have the duty he chargeth upon himself, which is to *trust in God*, and the grounds of the duty;

First, from confidence of better times to come, which would yeeld him matter of praising God.

10

And

Cap. 1.
3.

And then by a representation of God unto him, as a saving God in all troubles, nay as salvation it selfe, an open glorious Saviour in the view of all, *The salvation of my countenance*, and all this enforced from *Dauids* interest in God, *He is my God.*

Obfer. 1

Whence observe, first, from the state he was now in, that *since guilt and corruption hath been derived by the fall, into the nature of man, it hath been subjected to misery and sorrow, and that in all conditions: from the King that sitteth on the Throne to him that grindeth at the mill.* None ever hath been so good or so great, as could raise themselves so high as to be above the reach of troubles.

1.
Christ the Head was a man of many sorrowes.

And that choice part of mankind, the first fruits and excellency of the rest, (which we call the Church) more then others, which appears by consideration, both of the *Head*, the *Body* and *members* of the Church. For the *Head* Christ, he took our flesh as it was subject to misery after the fall, and was (in regard of that which he endured) both in life and death, a man of sorrowes.

2.
The Church hath been, and is full of sorrowes.

For the *Body* the Church, It may say from the first to the last as it is *Psal. 139. From my youth up they have afflicted me.*
The

The Soules Conflict.

9

Cap. 1.

The Church began in blood, hath grown up by blood, and shall end in blood, as it was redeemed by blood.

For the members, they are all predestinate to a conformity to Christ their Head, as in grace and glory, so in abasement, *Rom. 8. 29.* Neither is it a wonder, for those that are born soldiers to meet with conflicts, for travellers to meet with hard usage, for sea-men to meet with storms, for strangers in a strange country (especially amongst their enemies) to meet with strange entertainment.

A Christian is a man of another world, and here from home, which he would forget (if he were not exercised here) and would take his passage for his country. But though all Christians agree and meet in this, that *through many afflictions we must enter into heaven.* Yet according to the diversity of place, parts and grace, there is a different cup measured to every one.

And therefore it is but a plea of the flesh, to except against the Crosse, *Never was poore creature distressed as I am.* this is but self-love, for was it not the case both of Head, Body and members, as we see here in *David* a principall member. When

3.

The members of the Church have been and are full of crosses.

A.C. 14. 22.

Vso.

he

Cap. 4.

he was brought to this case, thus to reason the matter with himself, *Why art thou cast down O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me?*

Obser. 2.

From the frame of *Dauids* spirit under these troubles, we may observe, that as the case is thus with all Gods people, to be exercised with troubles, *They are sensible of them oftentimes, even to casting down and discouraging.* And the reason is, they are

Reas. 1.

flesh and blood, subject to the same passions, and made of the same mould, subject to the same impressions from without as

2.

other men; And their nature is upheld with the same supports and refreshings as others, the withdrawing and want of which affecteth them. And besides those troubles they suffer in common with other men, by reason of their new advancement,

3.

and their new disposition they have in and from Christ their Head, they are more sensible in a peculiar manner of those troubles that any way touch upon that blessed condition, from a new life they have in &c from Christ, which wil better appeare if we come more particularly to a discovery of the more special causes of this distemper: some of wick art, 1 *Withours us.* 2 *Some within us.*

The Soules Conflict.

11

Cap. 1.

CA. P. II.

of discouragements from without.

Outward
causes of
discouragement.

I.

God himselfe.

I. **G**OD himselfe: who sometimes withdrawes the beames of his countenance from his children, whereupon the soul even of the strongest Christian is disquieted; when together with the crosse, God himselfe seemes to be an enemy unto them. The child of God when he seeth that his troubles are mixed with Gods displeasure, and perhaps his conscience tells him that God hath a just quarrell against him, because he hath not renewed his peace with his God, then this anger of God puts a sting into al other troubles, and addes to the disquiet. There were some ingredients of this divine temptation (as we call it) in holy *David* at this time: though most properly a divine temptation be, when God appears unto us as an enemy, without any speciall guilt of any particular sin, as in *Jobs* case.

A divine
temptation;
what.

And no marvelle if Christians be from hence disquieted, when as the Sonne of God himselfe having always before enjoyed the sweet communion with his Father,
(511)

and

Cap. 2.

Mar. 17. 46

TO THE

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and now feeling an estrangement, that he might be a curse for us, complained in all his torments of nothing else, but *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* It is with the godly in this case, as with vapours drawn up by the Sun, which (when the extracting force of the Sun leaves them) fall down again to the earth from whence they are drawn. So when the soul, raised up and upheld by the beams of his countenance, is left of God, it presently begins to sink. We see when the body of the Sun is partly hid from us (for totally it cannot in an Eclipse by the body of the Moon) that there is a drooping in the whole frame of nature: so it is in the soul, when there is any thing that comes between Gods gracious countenance & it.

2.

In regard
of Satan,
who is all
for casting
down.

Besides, if we looke downe to inferiour causes, the soule is oft cast downe by Satan, who is all for casting downe, and for disquieting. For being a cursed spirit, cast and tumbled downe himself from heaven, where he is never to come again, he is here-upon full of disquiet, carrying a hell about himselfe, whereupon all that he labours for, is to cast downe and disquiet others, that they may be (as much as he can procure)

(cure)

Cap. 2

Heb. ed. I
two 2. 10
3. 1. 10
Satan's in-
struments,
who are all
for casting
downe.

Psa. 35. 13.

feeth men will to heaven, and that they have good title to it, then he follows them with all dejecting and uncomfortable temptations that he can: it is his continuall trade and course to seek his rest in our disquiet, he is by beaten practice and profession, a tempter in this kinde.

Again, what Satan cannot doe himself by immediate suggestions, that he labours to worke by his instruments, who are all for casting downe of those who stand in their light, as those in the Psalme, who cry, *Downe with him, downe with him, come to the ground*; a character and stamp of which mens dispositions, we have in the verse before this text, *Min enemies* (saith David) *reproach me*. As sweet and as compassionate a man as he was, to pray and *put on sackcloth* for them, yet he had enemies, and such enemies, as did not suffer their malice onely to boile and concoct in their owne breasts, but out of the abundance of their hearts, they reproached him in words. There is nothing the nature of man is more impatient of, then of reproaches; for there is no man so meane, but thinks himself worthy of some regard, and a reproachfull scorne shewes

an

an utter disrespect, which issues from the very superfluity of malice.

Neither went they behind his back, but were so impudent to say it *in his face*: a malicious heart and a slanderous tongue goe together, and though shame might have suppressed the uttering of such words, yet their insolent carriage spake as much *in David's heart*. We may see by the language of mens carriage what their heart saith, and what their tongue would vent, if they dared.

And this their malice was *unwearied*, for they said *daily* unto him, as if it had been fed with a continuall spring: malice is an unsatiable monster, it will minister words, as rage ministers weapons. But what was that they said so reproachfully? and said daily? *Where is now thy God?* they upbraid him with his singularity, they say not now, *where is God?* but, *where is thy God?* that thou dost boast so much on, as if thou hadst some speciall interest in him. Where we see that the scope of the devill and wicked men is to shake the godlies Faith and confidence in their God. As Satan laboured to divide betwixt Christ and his Father, *if thou beest*

Cap. 21

Psal. 39. 1.

This was
the way
of the
enemies of
David
to
gleaning
the
fruit
of the
field
of the
devils

Ver. 3.

Mat. 4.

Cap. 2.

This was
preached
in the be-
ginning of
the trou-
bles of the
Church.

Gen. 22.

Quest.

Answ.

the Son of God, command that these stones
be made bread; So he labours to divide be-
twixt Father, and Sonne, and us: they la-
bour to bring God in jealousie with Da-
vid, as if God had neglected him, beating
himselfe so much upon God. They had
some colour of this, for God at this time
had veiled himselfe from David, as he
does oft from his best children for the
better discovery of the malice of wicked
men. And doth not Satan tip the tongues
of the enemies of Religion now, to insult
over the Church now lying a bleeding?
*What becomes of their Reformation, of their
Gospel?* Nay, rather what's become of
your eyes, we may say unto them? For
God is nearest to his children when he
seems farthest off. *In the mount of the Lord
it shall be seen.* God is with them, and in
them, though the wicked be not aware of
it, it is all one, as if one should say betwixt
the space of the new and old Moone,
Where is now the Moone? when as it is
never nearer the Sun then at that time.

Where is now thy God?

In heaven, in earth, in me, every where
but in the heart of such as aske such que-
stions, and yet there they shall finde him

too in his time, filling their consciences with his wrath; and then, Where is their God? where are their great friends, their riches, their honours, which they set up as a god? what can they avale them now?

But how was *David* affected with these reproaches? their words were as swords, *as with a sword in my bones, &c.* they spake daggers to him, they cut him to the quick when they toucht him in his God, as if he had neglected his servants, when as the Devil himself regards those who serve his turne; touch a true godly man in his Religion, and you touch his life and his best freehold, he lives more in his God then in himself; so that we may see here there is a murther of the tongue, a wounding tongue, as well as a healing tongue: men thinke themselves freed from murther, if they kill none, or if they shed no blood, whereas they cut others to the heart with bitter words. It is good to extend the Commandement to awake the conscience the more, and breed humility, when men see there is a murdering of the tongue. We see *David* therefore upon this reproach to be presently so moved, as to fall out with himself for it. *Why art thou*

Verse 10.

A murther of the tongue.

Cap. 2.

to cast downe and disguised o my soule?
 This bitter taunt ranne so much in his
 minde, that he expresth it twice in this
 Plaine; He was sensible that they smelt
 at God through his fles, what they spoke
 in teorne and lightly, he tooke heavily.
 And indeed, when religion suffers, if there
 be any heavenly fire in the heart, it will
 rather breake out, then not discover it self
 at all. We see by daily experience, that
 there is a speeciall force in words uttered
 from a subtle head, a false heart, and a
 smooth tongue, to weaken the hearts of
 Professors, by bringing an evill report up
 on the strict profession of religion: as the
 turning and false spies did upon the good
 Luna, as if it were not onely in vaine, but
 dangerous to appeare for Christ in evill
 times. If the example of such as have faint
 spirits will discourage in an army, (as we
 see in Gideons History) then what will
 speech enforced both by example & with
 some shew of reason doe?

Judges 7.

Judges 7.

4.
 Discou-
 ragement
 comes
 from our
 selves.

To let others passe, we need not goe
 further than our selves, for to finde cau-
 ses of discouragement, there is a seminary
 of them within us. Our self, an enemy
 so much the worse, by how much the
 nearer,

Cap. 3

neater, will be ready to upbraid us within us, *where is now thy God?* why shouldst thou stand out in a profession that findes no better entertainment?

Cap. III.

Of discouragements from within.

But to come to some particular causes within us.

There is cause oft in the body of those in whom a melancholy temper prevail-
leth, darknesse makes men fearfull: Melancholy persons are in a perpetuall darknesse, all things seem black and darke unto them, their spirits as it were died black. Now to him that is in darkness, all things seem black and darke, the sweetest comforts are not lightsome enough unto those that are deep in melacholy. It is (without great watchfulness) Satans bath; which he abuseth as his owne weapon to hurt the soul, which by reason of its sympathy with the body is subject to be misled: as we see where there is a suffusion of the eye by reason of distemper of humours, or where things are presented through

Simile.

Cap. 3.

5.
A deluded
fancy causes
disquietnesse.

2.
Causes pri-
vative, of
discour-
agement
in our
selves.

I.
Ignorance
in the un-
derstand-
ing.

through a glasse to the eye; things seem to be of the same colour: so, whatsoever is presented to a melancholy person, comes in a darke way to the soule. From whence it is, that their fancy being corrupted, they judge amisse, even of outward things, as that they are sick of such & such a disease, or subject to such & such a danger, when it is nothing so; how fit are they then to judge of things removed from sense, as of their spirituall estate in Christ?

To come to causes more neer the soule it self, as when there is want of that which should be in it, as of *knowledge* in the *understanding*, &c. Ignorance (being darknesse) is full of false feares; In the night time men thinke every bush a thiefe; our Forefathers in time of ignorance were frightened with every thing, therefore it is the policy of Popish Tyrants taught them from the Prince of Darknesse, to keep the people in darknesse, that so they might make them fearfull, and then abuse that fearfulness to superstition, that they might the better rule in their consciences for their owne ends: and that so having intangled them with false feares, they might heale them againe with false cures.

Again,

Cap. 3.

2.

Forgetfulness
causeth discouragement.

Gen. 16.

Gen. 16.

3.

Not duly
prizing of
comforts.

Iob 15. 11.

Gen. 16.

4.

A childish
peevish-
ness.

Gen. 16.

Againe, though the soule be not ignorant, yet if it be forgetfull and mindlesse, if, as *Heb. 12.* the Apostle saith, *You have forgot the consolation that speaks unto you, &c.* We have no more present actual comfort, then we have remembrance: help a godly mans memory, and help his comfort, like unto charcoale which having once been kindled, are the more easie to take fire. He that hath formerly knowne things, takes ready acquaintance of them againe (as old friends :) things are not strange to him.

And further, want of setting due price upon comforts; as the Israelites were taxed for setting nothing by the pleasant land. It is a great fault, when (as they said to *Job*) *the consolations of the Almighty seem light, and small unto us*, unlesse we have some outward comfort which we linger after.

Add unto this, a childish kinde of peevishness: when they have not what they would have, (like children) they throw away all; which (though it be very offensive to Gods Spirit) yet it seizeth often upon men otherwise gracious. *Abraham* himselfe (wanting children) undervalued all

Gen. 3.

1 Kings.

Jonah 4. 9.

Jer. 31. 8. 5.

5.
False rea-
soning, er-
roneous
discourse.

all other blessings. *Jonah*, because he was
crossed of his gourd, was weary of his life:
The like may be said of *Eliac*, flying from
Jenebel. This pœvishnesse is increased by
a too much flattering of their grief, so
farre as to justifie it; like *Jonas*, I doe well
to be angry even unto death, he would stand
to it. Some with *Rachol* are so perempto-
ry, that they will not be comforted, as if
they were in love with their grievances.
Wilfull men are most vexed in their cross-
ses. It is not for those to be wilfull that
have not a great measure of wisdom to
guide their wills, for God delights to
have his will of those that are wedded to
their owne wills: as in *Pharashy*. No men
more subject to discontentments, then
those who would have all things after
their owne way.

Againe, one maine ground is, *Falsereas-
oning*, and error in our discourse, as that
we have no grace when we seele none:
feeling is not alwayes a fit rule to judge
our states by, that God hath rejected us,
because we are crossed in outward things,
when as this issues from Gods wisdom
and love. How many imagine their *fall-
ings* to be *fallings*, and their *fallings* to
be

The Soules Conflict.

123

Cap. 3.

be fallings away? Infirmities to be Presumptions: every sinne against Conscience, to be the sinne against the Holy Ghost? unto which misapprehensions, weake and darke spirits are subject. And Satan (as a cunning Rhetorician) here enlargeth the fancy, to apprehend things bigger than they are, Satan abuseth confident spirits another contrary way: to apprehend great sinnes as little, and little as none. Some also thinke that they have no grace, because they have not so much as growne Christians: whereas, there be severall ages in Christ. Some againe are so desirous and enlarged after what they have not, that they minde not what they have. Men may be rich, though they have not millions, and be not Emperors.

A double cunning of Satan, according to the humor of his patients.

6.

Likewise, some are much troubled, because they proceed by a false method and order in judging of their estates. They will begin with *Election*, which is the highest step of the ladder; whereas they should begin from a worke of grace wrought within their hearts, from Gods calling them by his Spirit, and their answer to his call, and so raise themselves upwards to know their *Election* by their answer

A false method & order in judging of our estates

Cap. 3.
2 Pet. 1.

answer to Gods calling. Give all diligence saith Peter, to make your calling and election sure: your election by your calling. God descends downe unto us from election to calling, and so to sanctification: we must ascend to him beginning where he ends. Otherwise it is as great folly as in removing of a pile of wood, to begin at the lowest first, and so (besides the needlesse trouble) to be in danger to have the rest to fall upon our heads. Which besides ignorance argues pride, appearing in this, that they would bring God to their conceits, and be at an end of their worke before they begin.

This great secret of Gods eternall love to us in Christ, is hidden in his breast, and doth not appeare to us, untill in the use of meanes God by his Spirit discovereth the same unto us; The Spirit letteth in to the soule so much life and sense of Gods love in particular to us, as draweth the soule to Christ, from whom it draweth so much vertue as changeth the frame of it, and quickneth it to duty, which duties are not grounds of our state in grace, but issues, springing from a good state before, and thus farre they help us, in judging

ing of our condition, that though they be not to be rested in, yet as streams they leade us to the spring-head of grace from whence they arise.

And of signes, some be more apt to deceive us, as being not so certaine, as *delights and joy in hearing the Word*, as appeareth in the *third ground*: some are more constant and certaine, as love to those that are truly good, and to all such, and because they are such, &c. these as they are wrought by the Spirit, so the same Spirit giveth evidence to the soule of the truth of them, and leadeth us to faith from whence they come, and faith leads us to the discovery of Gods love made knowne to us in hearing the word opened. The same Spirit openeth the truth to us, and our understandings to conceive of it, and our hearts to close with it by faith, not onely as a truth, but as a truth belonging to us.

Now this faith is manifested, either by it selfe reflecting upon it selfe the light of faith, discovering both it selfe and other things, or by the cause of it, or by the effect, or by all; Faith is oft more knowne to us in the fruit of it, then in it selfe; as
in

Mat. 13. 20

Cap. 3.

Eph. 1. 13.

1 John 4.
19.

Ver. 20.

In plants, the fruits are more apparent then the sap and root. But the most settled knowledge is from the cause, as when I know I believe, because in hearing Gods gracious promises opened and offered unto me, the Spirit of God carrieth my soul to cleave to them as mine owne portion. Yet the most familiar way of knowledge of our estates is from the effects to gather the cause, the cause being oftentimes more remote and spirituall, the effects more obvious & visible. All the vigour and beauty in nature which we see, comes from a secret influence from the heavens which we see not; In a cleare morning we may see the beames of the Sun shining upon the top of hills and houses before we can see the Sun it selfe.

Things in the working of them, doe issue from the cause, by whose force they had their being, but our knowing of things ariseth from the effect, where the cause endeth; we know God must love us before we can love him, and yet we oft first know that we love him; the love of God is the cause why we love our brother, and yet we know we love our brother when we see more clearly, then God whom we doe not see.

It

It is a spirituall peevishnesse that keeps men in a perplexed condition; that they neglect these helps to judge of their estates by; whereas God takes liberty to help us sometime to a discovery of our estate by the effects, sometimes by the cause, &c. And it is a sinne to see light by any worke of the Spirit, and the comfort we might have by it, and therefore we may well adde this as one cause of disquietnesse in many, that they grieve the Spirit, by quarrelling against themselves, and the work of the Spirit in them.

Another cause of disquiet is, that men by a naturall kinde of Popery seeke for their comfort too much in sanctification, neglecting justification, relying too much upon their own performances; Saint Paul was of another minde, *accounting all but dung and drosse, compared to the righteousness of Christ.* This is that garment, wherewith being decked we please our husband, and wherein we get the blessing. This giveth satisfaction to the conscience, as satisfying God himselfe, being performed by God the Son, and approved therefore by God the Father; Hereupon the soule is quieted, and faith holdeth out this

Comfort
sought in
sanctifi-
cation.

Philip. 3.

Rom. 8. 3.

To have &

sanctific

not only

the con-

for, we

work him

in us

the

Cap. 3.

this is a shield against the displeasure of God, and temptations of Satan: Why did the Apostles in their Prefaces joyne *grace & peace* together, but that we should seek for our *peace* in the free grace and favour of God in Christ?

Psal. 14. 3.

No wonder why Papists maintaine doubting, who hold salvation by works; because Satan joyning together with our consciences, will alwaies finde some flaw even in our best performances. Hereupon the doubting and misgiving soule comes to make this absurd demand, as, *Who shall ascend to heaven?* which is all one as to fetch Christ from heaven, and so bring him downe to suffer on the Crosse again. Whereas if we believe in Christ, we are as sure to come to heaven as Christ is there: Christ ascending and descending with all that he hath done is ours. So that *neither height nor depth can separate us from Gods love in Christ.*

Rom. 8. 39.

To have & maintaine true comfort, wee must grow up in holinesse.

But we must remember, though the maine pillar of our comfort be in the free forgivenesse of our sins; yet if there be a neglect in growing in holinesse, the soule will never be soundly quiet, because it will be prone to question the truth of justification,

Want of a
clear con-
science rai-
ses tumults
in the soul.

cation, and it is as proper for sinne to raise doubts and feares in the conscience, as for rotten flesh and wood to breed worms. And therefore we may well joyn this as a cause of disquietnesse, *the neglect of keeping a cleare conscience.* Sinne, like *Achan*, or *Jonas* in the ship, is that which causeth storms within and without; where there is not a pure conscience, there is not a pacified conscience, & therefore though some thinking to salve themselves whole in justification, neglect the cleansing of their natures, and ordering of their lives: yet in time of temptation, they will finde it more troublesome than they think. For a conscience guilty of many neglects, and of allowing it selfe in any sinne, to lay claime to Gods mercy, is to doe as we see Mountebanks sometimes doe, who wound their flesh to trie conclusions upon their owne bodies, how soveraigne the salve is; yet oftentimes they come to feel the smart of their presumption, by long and desperate wounds. So God will let us see what it is to make wounds to trie the preciousnesse of his Balme: such may go mourning to their graves. And though (perhaps) with much wrestling with God,

D

they

Cap. 3.

Psal. 51.

Gal. 6. 16.

Ignorance
of our
Christian
liberty.Danger of
abusing
Christian
liberty.

they may get assurance of the pardon of their sinnes, yet their conscience will be still trembling (like as *Dauids*, though *Nathan* had pronounced unto him the forgivenesse of his sin) till God at length speaks further peace, even as the water of the sea, (after a storme) is not presently still, but moves and trembles a good while after the storme is over. A Christian is a new creature, and walketh by rule, and so farre as he walketh *according to his rule peace is upon him*. Loose walkers that regard not their way, must thinke to meet with sorrowes in stead of peace. Watchfulnesse is the preserver of peace. It is a deep spirituall judgment to finde peace in an ill way.

Some againe, reap the fruit of their *ignorance of Christian liberty*, by unnecessary scruples and doubts. It is both unthankfulnesse to God, and wrong to our selves, to be ignorant of the extent of Christian liberty; *It makes melody to Satan, to see Christians troubled with that they neither should or need*. Yet there is danger in stretching Christian liberty beyond the bounds. For a man may condemne himself in that he approves, as in not walking circum-

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circumspectly in regard of circumstances, and so breed his owne disquiet, and give scandall to others.

10.

Want of imployment.

Sometimes also, God suffers men to be disquieted for want of imployment, who in shunning labour, procure trouble to themselves; and by not doing that which is needfull, they are troubled with that which is unnecessary. *An unemployed life is a burden to it selfe.* God is a pure Act, alwaies working, alwaies doing: and the neerer our soule comes to God, the more it is in action, and the freer from disquiet. Men experimentally feele that comfort in doing that which belongs unto them, which before they longed for, and went without; a heart not exercised in some honest labour, workes trouble out of it selfe.

11.

Omission of offices & duties of love.

Again, Omission of duties and offices of love, often troubles the peace of good people; for even in the time of death when they looke for peace and desire it most, then looking back upon their former failings, and seeing opportunity of doing good wanting to their desire; (the parties perhaps being deceased to whom they owed more respect) are hereupon

D 2

much

Cap. 3.

much disquieted, and so much the more, because they see now hope of the like advantages cut off.

A Christian life is full of duties, and the peace of it is not maintained without much fruitfulness, and looking about us: debt is a disquieting thing to an honest minde, and *duty is debt*. Hereupon the Apostle layeth the charge, *that we should owe nothing to any man but love*.

Rom. 13.
8.

12.
Want of
resolution
in good
things.

1 Kings
18. 21.

James 1.6.

Againe, one speciall cause of too much disquiet, is, *want of firme resolution in good things*. The soule cannot but be disquieted when it knowes not what to cleave unto, like a ship tossed with contrary windes; Halting is a deformed and troublesome gesture; so halting in Religion, is not only troublesome to others, and odious, but also *disquiets* our selves. *If God be God, cleave to him*. If the duties of religion be such as will bring peace of conscience at the length, be religious to purpose, practise them in the particular passages of life. We should labour to have a cleare judgment, and from thence a resolved purpose; a *wavering* minded man is inconstant in all his waies. God will not speak peace to a staggering spirit that hath
alwaies

alwaies its religion, and its way to chuse. Uncertaine men are alwaies unquiet men: and giving too much way to passion maketh men in particular consultations unsettled. This is the reason why in particular cases when the matter concerns our selves, we cannot judge so clearly as in generall truths, because Satan raiseth a mist between us and the matter in question.

2 Positive Causes

May be, 1. *When men lay up their comfort too much on outward things*, which being subject to much inconstancy and change, breed disquiet. Vexation alwaies followes vanity, when vanity is not apprehended to be where it is. In that measure we are cast downe in the disappointing of our hopes, as we were too much lifted up in expectation of good from them. Whence proceed these complaints, such a friend hath failed mee: I never thought to have fallen into this condition; I had setled my joy in this childe, in this friend, &c. but this is to build our comfort upon things that have no firme foundation, to build castles in the aire (as we use to say.) Therefore it is a good

When men lay up too much comfort in outward things.

Cap. 3.
Prov. 30.

desire of the wise man Agur, to desire God, *to remove from us vanity and lies*, that is, a vaine and a false apprehension pitching upon things that are vaine and lying, promising a contentment to our selves from the creature, which it cannot yeeld; confidence in vaine things makes a vaine heart, the heart becomming of the nature of the thing it relies on: we may say of all earthly things as the Prophet speaketh, *Here is not our rest.*

Mic. 2. 10.

Psal. 39.

It is no wonder therefore that worldly men are oft *cast down and disquieted*, when they *walk in a vaine shadow*, as likewise that men given much to recreations should be subject to passionate distemper, because here things fall out otherwise then they lookt for: recreations being about matters that are variable, which especially falls out in games of hazard, wherein they oft spare not Divine Providence it selfe, but breake out into blasphemy.

Likewise men that grasp more *businesses* than they can discharge, must needs beare both the blame and the grieve of losing or marring many businesses. It being almost impossible to doe many things

so well as to give content to Conscience; Hence it is that covetous and busie men trouble both their hearts and their houses; though some men from a largenesse of parts, and a speciall dexterity in affairs, may turne over much; yet the most capacious heart hath its measure, and when the cup is full, a little drop may cause the rest to spill. There is a spirituall surfeit, when the soule is overcharged with businesse; it is fit the soule should have its meet burthen and no more.

As likewise, those that depend too much upon the opinions of other men; A very light matter will refresh, and then againe discourage a minde that rests too much upon the liking of others. Men that seek themselves too much abroad, finde themselves disquieted at home; even good men many times are too much troubled with the unjust censures of other men, specially in the day of their trouble: It was *Jobs* case; and it is a heavy thing to have affliction added to affliction: It was *Hannahs* case, who being troubled in spirit, was censured by *Eli*, for distemper in braine; but for vaine men who live more to reputation than to conscience, it

2.

Too much relying upon the opinions of others.

Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avaritiæ subruit aut reficit.

1 Sam. i.

14.

Cap. 3.

cannot be that they should long enjoy settled quiet, because those in whose good opinion they desire to dwell, are ready often to take up contrary conceits upon slender grounds.

3.

Too much looking & poring on evils, in our selves & abroad.

Philip. 4. 4.

It is also a ground of overmuch trouble, when we look too much and too long upon the ill in our selves and abroad; we may fix our eyes too long even upon sin it self, considering that we have not only a remedy against the hurt by sin, but a commandement *to rejoyce alwaies in the Lord*. Much more may we erre in poring too much upon our afflictions; wherein we may finde alwaies in our selves upon seareh, a cause to justifie God, and alwaies something left to comfort us: Though we naturally minde more one crosse than a hundred favours, dwelling over-long upon the fore.

So likewise, our minds may be too much taken up in consideration of the *miseries of the times* at home and abroad, as if Christ did not rule in the midst of his enemies, and would not help all in due time; or as if the condition of the Church in this world, were not for the most part in an afflicted and conflicting condition.

In-

Indeed there is a perfect rest both for the soules and bodies of Gods people, but that is not in this world, but is kept for hereafter, here we are in a sea, where what can we look for, but storms?

To insist upon no more, one cause is, that we do usurp upon God, and take his office upon us, by troubling our selves in forecasting the event of things, whereas our work is onely to doe our work and be quiet, as children when they please their parents take no further thought; our trouble is the fruit of our folly in this kinde.

That which we should observe from all that hath been said is, that we be not over-hasty in censuring others, when we see their spirits out of temper, for we see how many things there are that worke strongly upon the weak nature of man. *We may sin more by harsh censure, than they by overmuch distemper:* as in *Jobs* case, it was a matter rather of just grief and pity, than great wonder or heavy censure.

Vse 1.

And, for our selves: If our estate be calme for the present, yet we should labour to prepare our hearts, not only for an alteration of estate, but of spirit, unlesse we

Vse 2.

Cap. 4.

we be marvellous carefull before-hand, that our spirits fall not down with our Condition. And if it befalls us to finde it otherwise with our soules then at other times, we should so farre labour to beare it, as that we doe not judge it our owne case alone, when we see here *David* thus to complaine of himself, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? &c.*

CAP. IV.

Of casting downe our selves, and specially by sorrow. Evils thereof.

Obser. I

TO returne againe to the words, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? &c.* or, *Why dost thou cast downe thy self? or, art cast downe by thy self?* Whence we may further observe, That we are prone to cast downe our selves, we are accessory to our owne trouble, and weave the web of our owne sorrow, and hamper our selves in the cords of our own twining. God neither loves nor wills that we should be too much cast down. We see our Saviour *Christ* how carefull he was that his *Disciples* should not be troubled, and there-

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Joh. 14. 1.

therefore he labours to prevent that trouble which might arise by his suffering and departure from them, by a heavenly sermon; *Let not your hearts be troubled, &c.* He was troubled himself, that we should not be troubled: The ground therefore of our disquiet is chiefly from our selves, though Satan will have a hand in it. We see many like sullen birds in a cage, beat themselves to death. This casting down of our selves, is not from humility, but from Pride, we must have our will, or God shall not have a good look from us, but as pettish and peevish children, we hang our heads in our bosome, because our wills are crost.

Therefore in all our troubles we should look first home to our own hearts, and stop the storme there; for we may thank our own selves, not only for our troubles, but likewise for overmuch troubling our selves in trouble. It was not the troubled condition that so disquieted *David's* soul, for if he had had a quiet minde, it would not have troubled him. But *David* yeelded to the discouragements of the flesh, and the flesh (so far as it is unsubdued) is like the sea, that is alwaies casting mire
and

Vse.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 4.

and dirt of doubts, discouragements and murmurings in the soule; let us therefore lay the blame where it is to be laid.

Obser. 2.

Againe, we see, *it is the nature of sorrow to cast downe, as of joy to lift up.* Grief is like lead to the soule, heaueie and cold; it sinks downwards, and carries the soule

Luke 18.

13.

with it. The poor *Publican* to shew that his soule was cast down under the sight of his sins, hung down his head, the position of his body was futable to the disposition of his minde, his heart and head were cast downe alike; And it is Satans practice to go over the hedge where it is lowest: he adds more weights to the soule, by his tentations and vexations. His sin cast him out of heaven, and by his temptations, he cast us out of our Paradise, and ever since, he labours to cast us deeper into sin, wherein his scope is, to cast us either into too much trouble for sin, or presumption in sin, which is but a lifting up, to cast us down into deep despaire at length, and so at last (if Gods mercy stop not his malice) he will cast us as low as himself, even into hell it self.

Reason.

How sorrow doth weaken the soule.

The ground hereof is, because *as the joy of the Lord doth strengthen, so doth sor-*

row

The Soules Conflict.

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row weaken the soul. How doth it weaken?

Cap. 4.

1. By weakning the execution of the functions thereof, because it drinketh up the spirits, which are the instruments of the soule.

I.

2. Because it contracteth, and draweth the soul into it self from communion of that comfort it might have with God or man. And then the soule being left alone, if it falleth, hath none to raise it up.

2.

Therefore, if we wil prevent casting down let us prevent grief the cause of it, and sin the cause of that. Experience proves that true which the Wise man saies, *Heaviness in the heart of a man makes it stoop, but a good word makes it better.* It bowes down the soul, and therefore our blessed Saviour inviteth such unto him, *Come unto me ye who are heavy laden with the burden of your sins.* The body bends under a heavy burden, so likewise the soule hath its burden, *Why art thou cast downe O my soule? Why so disquieted? &c.*

Eccles. 4.

10.

Vse.

How to prevent casting downe. Pro. 12. 25.

Mat. 11.

Whence, we see 1. that casting down breeds disquieting: Because it springs from pride, which is a turbulent Passion, when as men cannot stoop to that condition which God would have them in; this

Obser. I.

Reason.

Cap. 4.

this proceeds from discontentment, and that from pride. As we see, a vapour inclosed in a cloud causeth a terrible noise of thunder, whilst it is pent up there, and seeketh a vent; So all the noise within proceeds from a discontented swelling vapour. It is aire inclosed in the bowels of the earth which shakes it, which all the foure windes cannot doe.

No creature under heaven so low cast down as Satan, none more lifted up in pride, none so full of discord; the impurest spirits are the most disquiet and stormy spirits, troublesome to themselves and others; for when the soule leaves God once, and looks downwards, what is there to stay it from disquiet? Remove the needle from the pole starre, and it is alwaies stirring and trembling, never quiet till it be right againe. So displace the soule by taking it from God, and it will never be quiet. The Devill cast out of heaven and out of the Church, keeps adoe, so do unruly spirits led by him.

Now I come to the remedies,

1. *By expositulation with himself.*

2. *By laying a charge upon himselfe:*
(*Trust in God.*)

Remedies
against casting down
& disquieting.

It

It is supposed here, that there is no reason (which the wisdom from above allows to be a reason) why men should be discouraged, although the wisdom from beneath which takes part with our corruption, will seldom want a plea. Nay there is not onely no reason for it, but there are strong reasons against it, there being a world of evill in it.

For, 1. It indisposes a man to all good duties, it makes him like an instrument out of tune, and like a body out of joint, that moveth both uncomely and painfully. It unfits to duties to God, who loves a *cheerfull giver*, and especially a *thanksgiver*. Whereupon the Apostle joynes them both together, *In all things be thankfull, and rejoyce evermore*. In our communion with God in the Sacraments, joy is a chief ingredient. So in duties to men, if the spirit be dejected, they are unwelcome, and lose the greatest part of their life and grace; A cheerfull and a free spirit in duty is that which is most accepted in duty. We observe not so much what, as from what affection a thing is done.

* 2. It is a great wrong to God himself, and

Reasons against discouragement.

I.
It indisposes to all good duties.

1 Thess. 5.

* 2.
It wrongs God, making us thinke a misse of him.

Cap. 4.

and it makes us conceive black thoughts of him, as if He were an enemy. What an injury is it to a gracious father, that such whom he hath followed with many gracious evidences of his favour and love, should be in so ill a frame, as once to call it into question?

3.

It makes a man forget former blessings, &c.

3. So, it makes a man forgetful of all former blessings, and stops the influence of Gods grace, for the time present, and for that to come.

4.

It makes us unfit to receive good.
Jam. 1. 21.

4. So againe, For receiving of good: It makes us unfit to receive mercies; a quiet soule is the seat of wisdom. Therefore, *Meekness* is required for the receiving of that ingrafted word which is able to save our soules. Till the Spirit of God meekens the soule, (say what you will) it mindes nothing, the soule is not empty and quiet enough to receive the seed of the Word. It is ill sowing in a storme, so a stormy spirit will not suffer the Word to take place. *Men are deceived when they thinke a dejected spirit to be an humbled spirit.* Indeed it is so when we are cast down in the sense of our own unworthinesse, and then as much raised up in the confidence of Gods mercy. But when we cast ourselves down

down sullenly, and neglect our comforts, or undervalue them, it proceeds from pride, for it controuls (as much as in us lies) the wisdom and justice of God, when we think with our selves, why should it be so with us? as if we were wiser to dispose of our selves than God is. It disposeth us, for entertaining any temptation. Satan hath never more advantage than upon discontent.

5. Besides, it keeps off beginners from coming in, and entring into the waies of God, bringing an ill report upon religion, causing men to charge it falsly for an uncomfortable way, when as men never feel what true comfort meaneth, till they give up themselves to God. And it damps likewise the spirits of those that walk the same way with us, when as we should (as good travellers) cheer up one another both by word and example. In such a case, the wheels of the soul are taken off, or else, (as it were) want oyle, whereby the soul passeth on very heavily, and no good action comes off from it as it should, which breeds not onely uncomfortableness, but unseasonableness in good courses. For a man will never goe on

5.
It hinders
beginners
comming
into Gods
wayes.

Cap. 4.

1 Pet. 3.

Mat. 5. 24.

Exod. 9.

Vse.

comfortably and constantly in that which he heavily undertakes. That's the reason why uncheerfull spirits seldome hold out as they should. Saint *Peter* knew this well, & therefore he willeth, that there should be quietnesse and peace betwixt husband and wife, that their prayers be not hindred; Insinuating that their prayers are hindred by family-breaches. For by that means, those two (that should be one flesh and spirit) are divided, and so made two, and when they should mind duty, their mind is taken up with wrongs done by the one to the other.

There is nothing more required for the performing of holy duties than uniting of spirits; and therefore God would not have the sacrifice brought to the Altar, before reconciliation with our brother. He esteems peace so highly, that he will have his own service stay for it. We see when *Moses* came to deliver the *Israelites* out of bondage, their mind was so taken up with their grief, that there was no body within to give *Moses* an answer, their souls went altogether after their ill usage.

Therefore we should all endeavour and labour for a calmed spirit, that we may the

the better serve God in praying to him, and praising of him; and serve one another in love, that we may be fitted to doe and receive good: that we may make our passage to heaven more easie and cheerfull, without drooping and hanging the wing. So much as we are quiet and cheetfull upon good grounds, so much we live, and are as it were in heaven. So much as we yeeld to discouragement, we lose so much of our life and happinesse, cheerfulness being (as it were) that life of our lives, and the spirit of our spirits, by which they are more enlarged to receive happiness and to expresse it.

Cap. 4.

CAP. V.

Remedies of casting down: To cise the soules and presse it to give an account.

But to come to some helps: First, in that he expostulates with himself, we may observe, that *One way to raise a dejected soule, is, to cise it before it self, and as it were so reason the case.* God hath set up a court in mans heart, where, in the Conscience hath the office, both

Obser. 1

Cap. 7.
The court
of consci-
ence in
man.

Judgment
must passe
first or last,
without or
within, up-
on us.

of *Informer, Accuser, Witnesse, and Judge*; And if matters were well carried within our selves, this prejudging would be a prevention of future judging. It is a great mercy of God, that the credit and comfort of man are so provided for, that he may take up matters in himself, and so prevent publike disgrace. But if there be not a faire dispatch and transaction in this inferiour court within us, there will be a review in a higher court. Therefore by slubbering over our matters, we put God and our selves to more trouble than needs. For a judgment must passe first, or last, either within us or without us, upon all unwarrantable distempers. We must not only be ready to give an account of our *faith*, upon what Grounds we believe, but of all our *actions*, upon what grounds we doe what we doe; and of our *passions*, upon what ground we are passionate: as in a well governed State, upre and sedition is never stirred, but account must be given. Now in a mutiny, the presence and speech of a venerable man, composeth the minds of the disordered multitude; so likewise in a mutiny of the Spirit, the authority that God hath put into Reason

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(as a beam of himself) commands silence, and puts all in order again.

Cap. 10

Reason.

Distempers fall downe when they are arraigned before Reason.

Wants of consideration, raises and maintains our distempers.

In discouragement wee crosse our owne principles.

And there is good reason for it, for man is an understanding creature, and hath a rule given him to live by, and therefore is to be countable of every *thought, word, action, passion*. Therefore the first way to quiet the soule, is, to aske a reason of the tumult raised, and then many of our distempers for shame will not appear, because (though they rage in silent darknesse) yet they can say nothing for themselves, being summoned before strength of Judgment and Reason. Which is the reason why passionate men are loath that any court should be kept within them; but labour to stop judgment all they can. If men would but give themselves leave to consider better of it, they would never yeeld to such unreasonable motions of the soul: If they could but gain so much of their unruly passions, as to reason the matter within themselves, to hear what their consciences can tell them in secret, there would not be such offensive breakings out. And therefore, if we be ashamed to hear others upbraiding us, let us for shame hear our selves; And if no rea-

Cap. 5.

Corruption
of the
heart sets
the wit a-
worke.

King. 22.

Acts 24.

25.

son can be given, what an unreasonable thing is it for a man endowed with reason to contrary his own principles? and to be carried as a beast without reason; or if there be any reason to be given, then, this is the way to scan it, see whether it will hold water or not. We shall finde some reasons (if they may be so called) to be so corrupt and foule, that (if the judgment be not corrupted by them) they dare not be brought to light, but alwaies appear under some colour and pretext, for sin (like the Devill) is afraid to appear in its own likeness, & men seek out fair glosses, for foul intentions. The hidden secret reason is one, the open is another: the heart being corrupt, sets the wit a work, to satisfie corrupt will; such kinde of men are afraid of their owne consciences (as *Ahab* of *Michaiab*) because they feare it would deale truly with them: and therefore they take either present order for their consciences, or else (as *Felix* put off *Paul*) they adourn the court for another time. Such men are strangers at home, afraid of nothing more than themselves, and therefore in a fearfull condition, because they are reserved for the judgment of the great day.

day, if God doth not before that set upon them in this world. If men carried away with their owne lusts, would give but a little check, and stop themselves in their posting to hell, and aske, *What have I done? What am I now about? Whither will this course tend? How will it end? &c.* Undoubtedly men would begin to be wise. Would the blasphemers give away his soule for nothing (for there is no engagement of profit or pleasure in this, as in other sins, but it issues meerly out of irreverence, and a superfluity of prophane-nesse,) would he (I say) draw so heavy a guilt upon himselfe for nothing, if he would but make use of his reason? would an old man (when he is very near his journeyes end) make longer provision for a short way, if he would ask himself a Reason? But indeed Coverousnesse is an unreasonable vice.

If those also of the younger sort would aske of themselves, *Why God should not have the flower and marrow of their age? and why they should give their strength to the Devil?* It might a little take them off from the Devils service. But sin is a work of darknesse, and therefore shines not only

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The soules
exposition

Blasphemy
whence.

A lesson
for young
men.

Cap. 9.

Sin is unreasonable
so much
the more,
as without
reason, it
pretends
reasons.

Psal. 59.

the light of grace, but even the light of reason. Yet sin seldome wants a seeming reason. *Men will not go to hell without a shew of reason.* But such be sophisticall fallacies, not reasons; and therefore sinners are said to play the sophisters with themselves: *Satan could not deceive us, unless we deceived our selves first, and are willingly deceived:* wilfull sinners are blinde, because they put out the light of reason, and so think God (like themselves) blinde too; and therefore they are deservedly termed *mad men and fools*; for, did they but make use of that spark of reason, it would teach them to reason thus; *I cannot give an account of my waies to my self: what account shall I, or can I give then, to the Judge of all flesh ere it be long?*

And as it is a ground of repentance, in stopping our course to aske *what have I done?* So likewise of faith and new obedience, to aske *what shall I doe for the time to come?* and then upon setting, the soule in way of thanks, will be ready to ask of it self, *What shal I return to the Lord? &c.* So that the soule by this dealing with it self, promoteth it self to all holy duties till it come to heaven.

The

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The reason why we are thus backward to the keeping of this court in our selves, is *self-love*: we love to flatter our owne affections, *but this self-love, is but self-hatred in the end*; (as the Wiseman saies) he that regards not this part of wisdom, *hates his owne soule, and shall eat the fruit of his owne waies.*

Cap. 5.
Reas. 1.
Why we are so backward to keep court in our selves.

1. As likewise it issues from an irksomnesse of labour, which makes us rather willing to seem base and vile to our selves and others, than to take pains with our own hearts to be better, as those that are weary of holding the reines, give them up unto the horse neck, and so are driven whither the rage of the horse carrieth them: *springing a little trouble at first, doubles it in the end*; as he who will not take the pains to cast up his books, his books will cast up him in the end. *It is a blessed trouble that brings sound and long peace*: This labour saves God a labour, for therefore he *judges us*, because we would not take pains with our selves before.

2.
Irksomness of labour.

1 Cor. 11.
31.

3. And *pride* also, with a desire of liberty, makes men think it to be a diminishing of greatnesse and freedome, either to be curbed, or to curbe our selves: We love

3.
Pride.

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. 5.

*Mens mibi
proregno.*

Jonah 4.

*Esther 5.
Facit ira
nocentes.*

Obser. 2

love to be absolute, and independent; but this, as it brought ruine upon our nature in *Adam*, so it will upon our persons. Men (as *Luther* was wont to say) are born with a Pope in their belly, they are loath to give an account, although it be to themselves, their wills are in stead of a kingdom to them.

Let us therefore (when any lawlesse passions begin to stir) deal with our souls as God did with *Jonah*; *Doeſt thou well to be angry?* to fret thus? This will be a means to make us quiet. For, alas, what weak reasons have we often of strong motions; such a man gave me no respect, such another lookt more kindly upon another man than upon me, &c. You have some of *Hamans* spirit, that for a little neglect, would ruine a whole nation. Passion presents men that are innocent as guilty to us, and because we will not seem to be mad without reason, *pride* commands the wit to justify anger, and so one Passion maintains and feeds another.

Neither is it sufficient to *cite the soule before it self*; but, it must be pressed to give an account, as we see here, *David* doubles, and trebles the expostulation; as oft as
any

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any distemper did arise, so oft did he labour to keep it down. If passions grow too insolent, *Elles* mildnesse will do no good. It would prevent much trouble in this kinde, to subdue betimes (in our selves and others) the first beginnings of any unruly passions and affections, which (if they be not well tutor'd and disciplin'd at the first) prove as headstrong, unruly, and ill nurtured children, who (being not chastened in time) take such a head, that it is (oft) above the power of parents to bring them in order. A childe set at liberty (saith *Salomon*) breeds shame (at length) to his parents. *Adonia's* example shewes this. The like may be said of the affections set at liberty; It is dangerous to redeem a little quiet by yeelding to our affections, which is never safely gotten but by mortification of them.

Those that are in great place, are most in danger. By yeelding to themselves, to lose themselves; for they are so taken up with the person for a time put upon them, that they, both in look, and speech, and carriage, often shew that they forget both their naturall condition as men, and much more their supernaturall as Christians; and

Cap. 9.

1 Sam. 2.

24.

Prov. 29.

15.

Cap. 5.

Psal. 82.

6, 7.

2 Sam. 24.

4.

Prov. 30. 9.

and therefore are scarce counsellable by others or themselves, in those things that concern their severed condition that concerneth another world. Whereas it were most wisdom so to think of their place they beare, whereby they are called *gods*, as not to forget they must lay their person aside, and *die like men*: *David* himself that in his afflicted condition could advise with himself, and check himself, yet in his free and flourishing estate neglected the counsell of his friends. *Agur* was in jealousy of a full condition, and left in stead of saying, What have I done? why am I thus cast downe? &c. he should say, *Who is the Lord?*

Meaner men in their lesser sphere, often shew what their spirits would be, if their compasse were enlarged.

It is a great fault in breeding youth, for feare of taking down of their spirits, not to take down their pride, and get victory of their affections; whereas a proud unbroken heart raiseth us more trouble often than all the world beside. Of all troubles, the trouble of a proud heart is the greatest; It was a great trouble to *Haman* to lead *Mordecaies* horse, which another

Esh. 6. 1.

another man would not have thought so; the moving of a straw is troublesome to proud flesh. And therefore it is good to *beare the yoke from our youth*; It is better to be taken downe in youth, then to be broken in pieces by great crosses in age. First or last, self-deniall and victory over our selves is absolutely necessary; otherwise *flesh* which is a grace that requireth self-deniall, will never be brought into the soule, and bear rule there.

But, *what if pressing upon our soules will not help?*

Then speak to God, to Jesus Christ by prayer, that as he rebuked the winds and the waves, and went upon the Sea, so he would walke upon our soules, and command a calme there. It is no lesse power to settle a peace in the soule, than to command the seas to be quiet. It is Gods prerogative to rule in the heart, as likewise to give it up to it self, which (next to hell) is the greatest judgment; which should draw us to the greater reverence and feare of displeasing God. It was no ill wish of him, that desired God, to free him from an ill man, himself.

Cap. 5.

Lam. 3. 27.

Quest.

Ans.

Domine, libera me a malo homine, meipso.

Cap. 5.

CAP. VI.

Other Observations of the same nature.

Obfer. 3

Exo. 15. 5.

a Sam. 17.
23.

Moreover we see that a godly man can cast a restraint upon himself, as David here staies himself in falling. There is a principle of grace, that stops the heart, and pulls in the reines againe when the affections are loose. A carnall man, when he begins to be cast downe, sinks lower and lower, untill he sinks into despair, as lead sinks into the bottome of the sea. *They sunk, they sunk, like lead in the mighty waters.* A carnall man sinks as a heavy body to the center of the earth, and staies not, if it be not stopped: There is nothing in him to stay him in falling, as we see in *Achisophel* and *Saül*: who (wanting a support) found no other stay, but the swords point. And the greater their parts and places are, the more they intangle themselves; and no wonder, for they are to encounter with God and his deputy *Conscience*, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. When *Cain* was cast out of his fathers house, his heart and countenance was alwaies cast downe; for he had

had nothing in him to lift it upwards. But a godly man, though he may give a little way to passion; yet (as *David*) he recovers himself. Therefore as we would have any good evidence, that we have a better spirit in us than our owne, greater than the flesh or the world, let us (in all troubles we meet with) gather up our selves, that the streame of our owne affections carry us not away too farre.

There is an art or skill of bearing troubles, (if we could learne it) without overmuch troubling of our selves; As in bearing of a burthen there is a way so to poize it, that it weigheth not over heavy: If it hangs all on one side, it poizes the body downe. The greater part of our troubles we pull upon our selves, by not parting our care so, as to take upon us only the care of duty, and leave the rest to God; and by mingling our passions with our crosses; and (like a foolish patient) chewing the pills which we should swallow downe. We dwell too much upon the grief, when we should remove the soule higher. We are nearest neighbours unto our selves; when we suffer grief (like a canker) to eate into the soul, and (like a fire

There is
an art of
bearing
troubles.

Cap. 6.

fire in the bones) to consume the marrow and drink up the spirits, we are accessary to the wrong done both to our bodies and soules : we waste our own candle, and put out our light.

Obser. 4.

The cause
why wic-
ked men
cannot en-
dure soli-
tarinesse.

We see here again, that a godly man can make a good use of Privacy. When he is forced to be alone, he can talke with his God and himself; one reason whereof is, that his heart is a treasury and storehouse of divine truths; whence he can speak to himselfe, by way of check, or encouragement of himself: he hath a spirit over his owne spirit, to teach him to make use of that store he hath laid up in his heart, the spirit is never nearer him then when by way of witnesse to his spirit he is thus comforted; wherein the childe of God differs from another man, who cannot endure solitarinesse, because his heart is empty; he was a stranger to God before, and God is a stranger to him now; So that he cannot goe to God as a friend. And for his conscience, that is ready to speak to him, that which he is loath to heare: and therefore, he counts himself a torment to himselfe, especially in privacy.

We

We read of great Princes who after some bloody designs, were as terrible to themselves as they were formerly to others, and therefore could never endure to be awaked in the night, without Musique, or some like diversion. It may be, we may be cast into such a condition, (where we have none in the world to comfort us) as in contagious sicknesse, when none may come neare us, we may be in such an estate wherein no friend will owne us. And therefore let us labour now to be acquainted with God and our own hearts; and acquaint our hearts with the comforts of the holy Ghost; then, though we have not so much as a book to look on, or a friend to talk with, yet we may look with comfort into the book of our owne heart, and read what God hath written there by the finger of his Spirit: all books are written to amend: this one book of our heart and conscience, by this meanes we shall never want a Divine to comfort us, a Physician to cure us, a Counsellor to direct us, a Musitian to cheate us, a Controller to check us, because, (by help of the Word and Spirit) we can be all these to our selves.

Cap. 6.
As Charles
the IXth
after the
Massacre
in France.
Thuanus, li.
57. Somnū
post casum
Sancrilegi-
lomaū no-
cturni hor-
rores pic-
rumque in-
terrumpe-
bant & vin-
sum adhibiti
symphoniaci
expergesa-
cto concu-
liabant.

Ideo scri-
bitur o-
mnes libri
ut emende-
tur unus.

Cap. 6.

Obfer. 5.

Judges 9.

Mat. 25.

21.

Prov. 16.

32.

Another thing we see here, that God hath made every man a Governour over himself. The poore man that hath none to govern, yet may he be a King in himself. It is the naturall ambition of mans heart to desire government, as we see in the *Bramble*; Well then, let us make use of this disposition, to rule our selves. *Ab-salom* had high thoughts; O, If I were a King, I would doe so and so! So our hearts are ready to promise, If I were as such and such a man, in such and such a place, I would doe this and that.

But how dost thou manage thine own affections? how dost thou rule in thine house? in thy self? doe not passions get the upper hand, and keep reason under foot? When we have learned to rule over our own spirits well, then we may be fit to rule over others. *He that is faithfull in a little, shall be set over more. He that can governe himselfe* (in the Wise-mans judgment) *is better than he that can governe a City.* He that cannot, is like a *City without a wall*, where those that are in may goe out, and the enemies without, may come in at their pleasure. So where there is not a government set up, there
finne

fin breaks out, and Satan breaks in with-
our controule.

Cap. 6.

See again, the excellency of the soul, that
can reflect upon it self, and judge of what-
soever comes from it : A godly mans care
and trouble is especially about his soule,
as *David* here looks principally to that,
because all outward troubles are for to
help that; when God touches our bodies,
our estates, or our friends, he aimes at the
soule in all. God will never remove his
hand, till something be wrought upon
the soule, as *David's* moisture was in the
drought in Summer, so that he roared, and
carried himself unseemly (for so great and
holy a man) till his heart was subdued to
deale without all guile with God in con-
fessing his sinne, and then God forgave
him the iniquity thereof, and healed his
body too. In sicknesse, or in any other
trouble, it is best the Divine should be
before the Physician: and that man begin
where God begins. In great fires men
looke first to their Jewels, and then to
their lumber; so our soule is our best
Jewell. A carnall worldly man, is called
(and well called) a fleshy man, because his
very soule is flesh, and there is nothing but

Obser. 6.

All out-
ward trou-
bles are
for to help
the soule.

Psal. 32.

Cap. 6.

the world in him. And therefore, when all is not well within, he cries out, My *Body* is troubled, my *state* is broken, my friends faile me, &c. but all this while, there is no care for the poore soule to settle a peace in that.

The possession of the soul is the richest possession, no jewell so precious; the account for our owne soules, and the soules of others, is the greatest account, and therefore the care of soules should be the greatest care: What an indignity is it that we should forget such soules to satisfie our lusts? to have our wills? to be vexed with any, who by their judgment, example, or authority stop as we suppose our courses? Is it not the greatest plot of the world; First, to have their lusts satisfied: Secondly, to remove either by fraud or violence whatsoever standeth in their way: And thirdly, to put colours and pretences upon this to delude the world and themselves, employing all their carnall wit and worldly strength for their carnall aimes, and fighting for that which fights against their own soules? For what will be the issue of this but certaine destruction?

Of

Of this minde are not onely the dregs
of people, but many of the more refined
sort, who desire to be eminent in the
world; And to have their owne desires
herein, give up the liberty of their owne
judgments and consciences, to the desires
and lusts of others, *to be above others they
will be beneath themselves*, having those
mens persons in admiration for hope of
advantage, whom otherwise they despise,
and so substituting in their spirits, man in
the place of God, lose heaven for earth, &
bury that divine spark (their soules) capable
of the Divine nature, and fitter to be a san-
ctuary and temple for God to dwell in,
than by closing with baser things to be-
come base it self. We need not wonder
that others seem base to carnall men, who
are base both in and to themselves. It is
no wonder they should be cruell to the
soules of others, who are cruell to their
own soules; that they should neglect and
starve others, that give away their owne
soules in a manner for nothing. Alas!
upon what poore termes doe they hazard
that, the nature and worth whereof is be-
yond mans reach to comprehend. Many
are so carelesse in this kinde, that if they

Cap. 6.

were thoroughly perswaded that they had soules that should live for ever, (either in blisse or torment) we might the more easily worke upon them. But as they live by sense, as beasts, so they have no more thoughts of future times than beasts, except at such times as conscience is awaked by some suddaine judgement, whereby Gods wrath is revealed from heaven against them. But happy were it for them, if they might die like beasts, whose misery dies with them.

To such an estate hath sin brought the soule, that it willingly drowneth it self in the senses, and becomes in some sort incarnate with the flesh.

We should therefore set our selves to have most care of that, which God cares most for: when he breathed into us at first, set his owne image upon, gave so great a price for, and values above all the world besides. Shall all our study be to satisfie the desires of the flesh, and neglect this?

Is it not a vanity to preferre the casket before the jewell, the shell before the pearle, the gilded posseward before the treasure? and is it not much more vanity, to preferre the outward condition before the

The Soules Conflict.

67

Cap 6.

Job 1.

2 Sam. 17.

23.
We should
set the soul
first in or-
der.

the inward ? The soule is that which Satan and his hath most spite at, for in troubling our bodies or estates, he aimes at the vexation of our soules. As in *Job*, his aime was to abuse that power God had given him over his children, body and goods, to make him out of a disquieted spirit blaspheme God. It is an ill method to begin our care in other things, and neglect the soule, as *Achitophel*, who set his house in order, when he should have set his soule in order first. Wisdome begins at the right end. If all be well at home, it comforts a man, though he meets with troubles abroad. Oh (saith he) I shall have rest at home, I have a loving wife and dutifull children, so whatsoever we meet withall abroad, if the soule be quiet, thither we can retire with comfort. See that all be well within, and then all troubles from without cannot much annoy us.

Grace will teach us to reason thus, God hath given mine enemies power over my liberty and condition, but shall they have power and liberty over my spirit ? It is that which Satan and they most seek for: but never yeeld, Oh my soule ! And thus

Cap. 6.

a godly man will become more than a conquerer; when in appearance he is conquered, the cause prevailes, his spirit prevailes and is undaunted. A Christian is not subdued till his spirit be subdued. Thus *Job* prevailed over *Satan* and all his troubles at length. This tormenteth prond persons to see godly men enjoy a calme and resolute frame of minde in the midst of troubles; when their enemies are more troubled in troubling them, than they are in being troubled by them.

obser. 7.

We see likewise here, *how to frame our complaints*: *David* complains not of God, nor of his troubles, nor of others, but of his owne soule: he complaines of himself, to himself; As if he should say, *Though all things else be out of order, yet O my soule thou shouldst not trouble me too: thou shouldst not betray thy self unto troubles, but rule over them.* A godly man complaines to God, yet not of God, but of himself; a carnall man is ready to justifie himself, and complaine of God. He complaines not to God, but of God (at the least) in secret murmuring: he complaines of others that are but Gods vials; he complaines of the grievance that

that lies upon him, but never regards what is amisse in himself within : Openly he cries out upon Fortune, yet secretly he striketh at God, under that Idoll of Fortune, by whose guidance all things come to passe; whilst he quarrels with that which is nothing, he wounds him that is the cause of all things: like a gouty man that complaines of his shooc, and of his bed; or an aguish man, of his drink, when the cause is from within. So men are disquieted with others, when they should rather be disquieted and angry with their owne hearts.

We condemne *Jonas* for contending with God, and justifying his unjust anger, but yet the same risings are in men naturally, if shame would suffer them to give vent to their secret discontent, their heart speaks what *Jonas* tongue spake. Oh, but here we should lay our hand upon our mouth, and adore God, and command silence to our souls.

No man is hurt but by himselfe first; We are drawn to evil, and allured from a true good to a false by our owne lusts, *God shapes no man.* Satan hath no power over us further than we willingly lie open

Jam. 1. 13.

to

Cap. 6.

1 Sam. 16.

Mat. 27. 3.

Ephes. 4.

to him; Satan works upon our affections, and then our affections worke upon our will. He doth not worke immediatly upon the will; we may thanke our selves in willingly yeelding to our owne passions, for all that ill *Satan* or his instruments drawes us unto; *Saul* was not vexed with an *evill spirit*, till he gave way to his own *evill spirit of envie* first. The Devil entred not into *Judas*, untill his covetous heart made way for him. The Apostle strenghtneth his conceit against rash and lasting anger from hence, that by this we give way to the Devill. It is a dangerous thing to passe from Gods government, and come under Satans.

Satan mingleth himself with our owne passions, therefore we should blame our selves first, be ashamed of our selves most, and judge our selves most severely. But self-love teacheth us the contrary method, to translate all upon others; it robs us of a right judgement of our selves. Though we desire to know all diseases of the body by their proper names, yet we will conceive of sinfull passions of the soule under milder termes; as *lust* under *love*; *rage* under *just anger*; *murmuring* under

under just displeasure, &c. thus whilst we flatter our grief, what hope of cure! Thus sin hath not onely made all the creatures enemies to us, but our selves the greatest enemies to our selves, and therefore we should begin our complaints against our selves, and discusse our selves thoroughly; how else shall we judge truly of other things without us, above us, or beneath us? The Sun when it rises enlightens first the nearest places, and then the more remote; So where true light is set up, it discovers what is amiss within first.

Hence also we see, that as in all discouragements a godly man hath most trouble with his own heart, so he knows how to carry himself therein, as David doth here.

Obser. 8.

For the better clearing of this, we must know there be divers kinds and degrees of conflicts in the soule of man, whilst it is united to the body.

First, between one corrupt Passion and another, as betwene Covetousnesse and Pride; Pride calls for expence, Covetousnesse for restraint; oft Passions fight not onely against God and reason, to which they owe a homage, but one against another; Sin fights against sin, and a lesser sin

I.

is

Cap. 6.

is oftentimes overcome by a greater. The soule in this case, is like the Sea tossed with contrary windes; and like a kingdome divided, wherein the subjects fight both against their Prince, and one against another.

2.

Secondly, there is a naturall conflict in the *Affections*, whereby *Nature* seeks to preserve it self, as betwixt anger and fear; *Anger* calls for revenge, *Fear* of the law bindes the soule to be quiet. We see in the creatures, *fear* makes them abstaine from that which their appetites carry them unto. A *Wolfe* comes to a flock with an eagernesse to prey upon it, but seeing the *Shepherd* standing in defence of his sheep, returns and doth no harme, and yet for all this as he came a wolfe, so he returnes a wolfe.

A naturall man may oppose some sin from an obstinate resolution against it, not from any love of God, or hatred of sin, as *sin*, but because he conceives it a brave thing to have his will. As one hard weapon may strike at another, as a stone-wall may beat back an arrow, but this opposition is not from a contrariety of nature, as is betwixt fire and water.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, there is a conflict of a higher nature, as between some *sins* and the light of *reason* helped by a naturall conscience. The *Heathen* could reason from the dignity of the soule, to count it a base thing to prostitute themselves to beastly lusts, so as it were degrading and unmanning themselves. Naturall men desirous to maintaine a great opinion of themselves, and to awe the inferiour sort by gravity of deportment in carriage; will abstaine from that, which otherwise their hearts carry them unto, lest yeelding should render them despised, by laying themselves too much open; as because passion discovers a foole as he is, and makes a wise man thought meaner than he is; therefore a prudent man will conceale his passion. Reason refined and raised by education, example, and custome, doth break in some degree the force of naturall corruption, and brings into the soule, as it were, another nature, and yet no true change; as we see in such as have been injured to good courses; they feel conscience checking them upon the first discontinuance and alteration of their former good waies, but this is usually from a former

*Major sum,
& ad ma-
jora natus,
quã ut cor-
poris mei
sim man-
cipium.
Senec.*

Cap. 6.

2 Kings
12. 2.

former impression of their breeding, as the boat moves some little time upon the water by virtue of the former stroke, yet at length we see corruption prevailing over education, as in *Fear*, who was awed by the reverent respect he bare to his Uncle *Jabojada*, he was good *all his uncles daies*: And in *Nero*, in whom the goodness of his *education* prevailed over the fierceness of his *nature*, for the first five years.

4.

Fourthly, but in the Church, where there shineth a light above nature, as there is a discovery of more finnes, and some strength, with the light, to perform more duty; So there is a further conflict than in a man that hath no better than *nature* in him. By a discovery of the excellent things of the *Gospel*, there may be some kinde of joy stirred up, and some degree of obedience: whence there may be some degree of resistance against the fins of the *Gospel*, as obstinate unbelief, desperation, prophaneesse, &c. A man in the Church may doe more than another out of the Church, by reason of the enlargement of his knowledge; whereupon such cannot sin at so easie a rate as others that know lesse,

lesse, and (therefore) meet with lesse opposition from conscience.

Fifthly, there is yet a further degree of conflict betwixt the sanctified powers of the soule, and the flesh, not onely as it is seated in the baser parts, but even in the best faculties of the soul, and as it mingles it self with every gracious performance: (as in *David*) There is not only a conflict betwixt sin and conscience, inlightened by a common work of the *Spirit*; but between the commanding powers of the soule sanctified, and it self unsanctified, between reasons of the flesh and reasons of the spirit, between faith and distrust, between the true light of knowledge, and false light. For it is no question but the flesh would play its part in *David*, and muster up all the strength of reason it had. And usually flesh, as it is more ancient than the spirit, (we being first naturall, then spirituall) so it will put it self first forward in devising shifts, as *Esaú* comes out of the wombe first before *Jacob*; yet hereby the spirit is stirred up to a present examination and resistance, and in resisting (as we see here) at length the godly gets the victory. As in the conflict between the
higher

Cap. 7.

higher parts of the soule with the lower, it clearly appears, that the soule doth not rise out of the temper of the body, but is a more noble substance, commanding the body by reasons fetched from its owne worth; so in this spirituall conflict, it appears there is something better than the soule it self, that hath superiority over it.

CAP. VII.

Difference between good men and others in conflicts with sin.

Quest.

BUT how doth it appear that this combat in David was a spirituall combat?

Answ. 1

First, a naturall conscience is troubled for sins against the light of nature onely, but David for inward and secret corruptions; as discouragement and disquietnesse arising from faint trusting in God.

David's conflict was not onely with the sensuall lower part of his soule, which is carried to ease and quiet, and love of present things; but he was troubled with a mutiny in his understanding, betweene faith and distrust; and therefore he was forced

forced to rouse up his soule for oft to stay
in God, which shews that carnall reason
did sollicit him to discontent, and had
many colourable reasons for it.

Secondly, a man indued with common
grace, is rather a patient than an agent in
conflicts; the *light* troubles him against
his will, as discovering and reprov-
ing him, and hindring his sinfull content-
ments; his heart is more byased another
way if the *light* would let him; but a god-
ly man labours to help the *light*, and to
worke his heart to an opposition against
sin; he is an agent as well as a patient. As
David here doth not suffer disquieting,
but is *disquieted* with himself for being so.
A godly man is an *agent* in opposing his
corruption, and a *patient* in induring of it;
whereas a naturall man is a secret *agent* in
and for his corruptions, and a *patient* in
regard of any help against them; A good
man suffers evill and doth good, a natu-
rall man suffers good and doth evill.

Thirdly, A conscience guided by com-
mon light, withstands distempers most by
outward means, but *David* here fetcheth
help from the Spirit of God in him, and
from trust in God. Nature works from
G within,

2.

3.

Cap. 2

within; so doth his new nature; *David* is not only something *disquieted*, and something *mouled* for being *disquieted*; but sets himself thoroughly against his *discontents*; he *complains*, and *expostulates*, he *confures*, and *struggeth* his soule. The other, if he doth any thing at all, yet it is faintly; he seekes out his corruption as a coward doth his enemy, loth to finde him, and more loth to encounter with him.

4.

Fourthly, *David* with stands sinne constantly, and gets ground. We see here, he gives not over at the first, but presseth again and again. Nature works constantly, so doth the new nature. The conflict in the other is something forced, as taking part with the worser side in himself; good things have a weak, or rather no party in him; bad things a strong; and therefore he soone gives over in this holy quarrell.

5.

Fifthly, *David* is not discouraged by his foiles, but sets himself afresh against his corruptions, with confidence to bring them under. Whereas he that hath but a common work of the Spirit, after some foiles, lets his enemy prevaile more and more, and so despaires of victory, and thinks

thinks it better to lie still, than to rise and take a new fall; by which means his later end is worse than his beginning; for depending in the spirit, he ends in the flesh. A godly man, although upon some foile, he may for a time be discouraged, yet by holy indignation against sin, he renews his force, and sets afresh upon his corruptions, and gathers more strength by his falls, and groweth into more acquaintance with his owne heart, and Satans malice, and Gods strange waies in bringing light out of darknesse.

Sixty, An ordinary Christian may be disquieted for being disquieted, as *David* was, but then it is onely as disquiet hath vexation in it; but *David* here striveth against the unquietnesse of his spirit, not onely as it brought vexation with it, but as it hindered communion with his *God*.

In sin there is not only a gain binding over the soule to Gods judgment, and thereupon filling the soule with inward fears and terrors, but in sin likewise there is, 1. a contrariety to Gods holy nature; and 2. a contrariety to the Divine nature and image stamped upon our selves; 3. a weakening and disabling of the soule from

6.

Evils of
sin.

1.

2.

3.

G 2

good;

Cap. 7.

4.

good; and, 4. a hindring of our former communion with God, sinne being in its nature a leaving of God the fountaine of all strength and comfort, and cleaving to the creature; hereupon the soule having tasted the sweetnesse of God before, is now grieved, and this grief is not only for the guilt and trouble that sin drawes after it, but from an inward Antipathy and contrariety betwixt the sanctified soule and sin. It hates sin as sin; as the only hane and poyson of renewed nature, and the onely thing that breeds strangenesse betwixt God and the soul. And this hatred, is not so much from discourse and strength of reason, as from nature it self rising presently against its enemy; The *Lambe* presently shuns the *Wolfe* from a contrariety; Antipathies wait not for any strong reason, but are exercised upon the first presence of a contrary object.

7.

Seventhly, hereupon ariseth the last difference; that because the soule hateth sin as sin, therefore it opposeth it universally and eternally, in all the powers of the soule, and in all actions inward and outward issuing from those powers: *David regarded no iniquity in his heart, but hated every*

Psal. 66.
18.

every

Cap. 7.

Psal. 119.

5.

1 Joh. 3. 9.

every evil way. The desires of his soules were, that it might be so directed, that he might keep Gods law. And if there had been no binding law, yet there was such a sweet sympathy and agreement betwixt his soul and Gods truth, that he delighted in it above all naturall sweetnesse; Hence it is that Saint *John* saith, He that is borne of God cannot sin, that is, so far forth as he is borne of God; his new nature will not suffer him, he cannot lie, he cannot deceive, he cannot be earthly minded, he cannot but love and delight in the persons and things that are good. There is not onely a light in the understanding, but a new life in the will, and all other faculties of a godly man; what good his knowledge discovereth, that his will makes choice of, and his heart loveth; What ill his understanding discovers, that his will hateth and abstains from: But in a man not thoroughly converted, the will and affections are bent otherwise, he loves not the good he doth, nor hates the evil he doth not.

Therefore let us make a narrow search into our soules upon what grounds we oppose sin, and fight Gods battels. A com

v/c.

Cap. IV

REL. III. 7

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man Christian is not cast down, because he is disquieted in Gods service, or for his inward failings that he cannot serve God with that liberty and freedom he desires, &c. But a godly man is troubled for his distempers, because they hinder the comfortable intercourse betwixt God and his soule, and that spiritual composednesse, and Sabbath of spirit which he enjoyed before, and desires to enjoy againe. He is troubled, that the waters of his soule are troubled so, that the image of Christ shines not in him as it did before. It grieves him to find an abatement in affection, in love to God, a distraction or coldnesse in performing duties, any doubting of Gods favour, any discouragement from duty, &c. A godly mans comforts and grievances are hid from the world; naturall men are strangers to them. Let this be a rule of discerning our estates, how we stand affected to the distempers of our hearts. If we finde them troublesome, it is a ground of comfort unto us that our *spirits* are ruled by a *higher Spirit*, and that there is a principle of that life in us, which cannot brook the most secret corruption, but rather casts it

out

Cap. 3.

Answ.

1.

2.

e. 11/10

79. 10

to There is a threefold miscarriage of inward trouble.

1. When the soule is troubled for that it should not be vexed for, as Ahab, when he was crost in his will for Nabobs vineyard.

2. In the ground, as when we grieve for that which is good, and for that which we should grieve for, but it is with too much reflecting upon our own particular.

As in the troubles of the State or Church, we ought to be affected; but not because these troubles hinder any liberties of the just, and restrain pride of life, but from higher respects. As that by these troubles Gods dishonoured, the publike exercise of Religion hindered, and the gathering of soules thereby stopped: As, the States and common wealths which should be harbors of the Church, are disturbed; as lawlesse courses and persons prevaile, as Religion and Justice is triumphed over, and trodden under. Men usually are grieved for publike miseries from a spirit of self-love only, because their own private is imbarqued in the publike. There is a depth of deceit of the heart in this matter.

3. So for the measure, when we trouble ourselves (though not without cause) yet without bounds.

The

The Soules Conflict.

Cap. I.

The spirit of man is like unto most elements, as ayre and water, which have no bounds of their own to contain them in, but those of the vessel that keeps them: water is spilt and lost without something to hold it, so it is with the spirit of man, unlesse it be bounded with the Spirit of God. Put the case a man be disquieted for sin, (for which not to be disquieted is a sin) yet we may look too much, and too long upon it, for the soule hath a double eye, one to look to sin, another to look up to Gods mercy in Christ. Having two objects to look on, we may sin in looking too much on the one, with neglect of the other.

Quest.

Ans. I.

Seeing then, disquieting and dejection for sin is necessary, how shall we know when it exceeds measure?

First, when it hinders us from both duties, or in the performance of them; by distraction or otherwise; whereas they are given to carry us to that which is pleasing to God, and good to our selves.

Grief is ill when it taketh off the soule from minding that it should, and so indisposed us to the duties of our callings.

Christ

Luk. 23.
42.

Christ upon the Crosse was grieved to the utmost, yet it did not take away his care for his mother: so the good Thief in the midst of his pangs, laboured to gaine his fellow and to save his own soule, and to glorifie Christ. If this be so in grief of body, which taketh away the free use of reason and exercise of grace more than any other grief, then much more in grief from more remote causes, for in extremity of body the sicknesse may be such, as all that we can perform to God is a quiet submission and a desire to be carried unto Christ by the prayers of others, we should to minde our grief as not to forget Gods mercy, or our own duty.

2.

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Secondly, when we forget the grounds of comfort, and suffer our minde to run only upon the present grievance, it is a sinne to dwell on sinne, and turmoile our thoughts about it, when we are called to thankfulness. A Physician in good discretion forbids a dish at some times to prevent the nourishment of some disease, which another time he gives way unto. So we may and ought to abstaine from too much feeding our thoughts upon our corruptions in case of discouragement, which

645

Psal. 118.

24.

None

with

1 Thes. 5.

16.

3.

which at other times is very necessary. It should be our wisdom in such cases to change the object, and labour to take off our minds, and give them to that which calls more for them. Grief of possession unreasonable upon us when there is cause of joy, and when we are called to joy, as *Isaiah* justly found fault with *Dathan* for grieving too much, when God had given him the victory, and rid him and the State of a dangerous foe. God hath made some daies for joy, and joy is the proper work of those daies. *This is the day which the Lord hath made.* Some in a sick distemper, desire that which increaseth their sickness, so some that are deeply cast down, desire a wakening ministry, and what ever may cast them down more, whereas they should meditate upon comforts, and get some sweet assurance of Gods love. Joy is the constant temper, which the soule should be in. *Princes ye must* I saith the Apostle. *If ye be sorrowful for us, we will sorrow more, but go into a sweet reason.* Some should think of that which is comfortable, and of such things as may raise up the soule, and sweeten the spirit. Thirdly, Grief is too much, when it inclines

Q. 2.

inclines the soule to any inconvenient courses: (for if it be not lookt to, it is an ill counsellor) when either it hurts the health of our bodies, or draws the soule (for to ease it selfe) to some unlawfull liberty. When grief keeps such a noise in the soule, that it will not heare what the messengers of God, or the still voice of the Spirit saith, as in combustions, loud cries are scarce heard: so in such cases the soule will neither heare it selfe, nor others. The fruit of this overmuch trouble of spirit, is increase of trouble.

Quest.

3. Another question may be, *What that forces & holy temper in the soul should be in, that it may neither be faulty in the desert, nor too much abound in grief and sorrow?*

Answ.

1. The soule must be raised to a right grief.

2. The grief that is raised, though it be right, yet it must be bounded. Before we speake of raising grief in the godly, we must know there are some who are altogether strangers to any kinde of spirituall grief, or trouble at all; such must consider, that the way to prevent everlasting trouble, is to desire to be troubled with a
pre.

preventing trouble. Let those that are not in the way of grace think with themselves what cause they have, not to take a minutes rest while they are in that estate. For a man to be in debt both body and soule, subject every minute to be arrested and carried prisoner to Hell, and not to be moved: For a man to have the wrath of God ready to be powred out upon him, and Hell gape for him, day to carry a hell about him in conscience (if it were awake) and to have all his comfort here hanging upon a weak threed of this life ready to be cut and broken off every moment, and to be cursed in all those blessings that he enjoyes: and yet not to be disquieted, but continually treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, by running deeper into Gods books: for a man to be thus and not to be disquieted, is but the Devils peace, whilst the strong man holds possession: *A burning Agne is more hopefull than a Letbargy.* The best service that can be done to such men is to startle and rouse them, and so with violence to pull them out of the fire, (as *Jude* speaks) or else they will another day curse that cruell mercy that lets them alone now. In
all

I.
Right
wonder
filled.

Jude 23.

Or. 10.
25

Cap. 2.

all their joyntly in this world, they are but
as a Book fairly bound, which when it is
opened is full of nothing but Tragedies.
So when the book of their consciences
shall be once opened, there is nothing to
be read but lamentations and woes. Such
men were in a way of hope, if they had
but so much apprehension of their estates,
as to aske themselves, *What have I done?*
If this be true that there are such fearful
things prepared for sinners, why am I not
more troubled? Why am I no more troubled
and discouraged for my wicked courses?
Despaine to such is the beginning of com-
fort; and trouble the beginning of peace.
A storme is the way to a calme, and hell
the way to heaven.

I.
Right
grief, how
raised.

But for raising of a right grief in the
soule of a holy man, that is the first
the soule must seeke, in what manner it is
over, whether there be any sin hanging on
the fle hairented of. If all be not well
within us, then there is place for inward
trouble, whereby the soule may sinne
itselfe.

Lev. 16.
29.

God now miserie to needfull for his
people, that he appointed certaine daies
for afflicting them; because it is fit that
his

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fin contracted by joy should be dissolved by grief; and sin is so deeply invested into the soule, that a separation betwixt the soule and it cannot be wrought without much grief; when the soule hath smarted for sin, it sets then the right price upon reconciliation with God in Christ, and it teacheth what a bitter thing sinne is, and therefore it will be afraid to be too bold with it afterward; it likewise aweth the heart so, that it will not be so loose towards God as it was before, and certainly that soule that hath felt the sweetness of keeping peace with God, cannot but take deeply to heart, that there should be any thing in us that should divide betwixt us and the fountaine of our comfort, that should stop the passage of our prayers, and the current of Gods favors both towards our selves and others; it is such an ill as is the cause of all other ill, and damps all our comforts.

2. We should look out of our selves also, considering whether for troubles at home or abroad, God calls not to mourning or troubling of our selves; grief and compassion is as well required as grief or contention.

It

2. We should look out of our selves also, considering whether for troubles at home or abroad, God calls not to mourning or troubling of our selves; grief and compassion is as well required as grief or contention.

Cap. 8.

Jer. 9. 1.

Simil cura-
rem, nil e-
varem.

2.

Grief to
be bound-
ed.

1.

When our
affections
are pliable.

It is a dead member that is not sensible of the state of the body. *Jeremie* for fear he should not weep enough for the distressed estate of the Church, desired of God, *that his eyes might be made a fountain of tears.* A Christian, as he must not be proud flesh, so neither must he be dead flesh: none more truly sensible either of sin or of misery (so far as misery carries with it any sign of Gods displeasure) than a true Christian: which issues from the life of Grace, which (where it is in any measure) is lively, and therefore sensible: for God gives motion and senses for the preservation of life. As Gods bowels are tender towards us, so Gods people have tender bowels towards him, his cause, his people, and his Church. The fruit of this sensibleness is earnest prayer to God, (As *Melancthon* said well) *If I cared for nothing, I would pray for nothing.*

2. Grief being thus raised, must, as we said before, be bounded and guided.

1. God hath framed the soule, and planted such affections in it, as may answer all his dealing towards his children, that when he enlargeth himself towards them, then the soule should enlarge it self to him

him again, when he opens his hand we ought to open our hearts, when he shewes any token of displeasure, we should grieve, when he troubles us, we should trouble and grieve our selves. As God any way discovereth himself, so the soule should be in a futable pliability. Then the soule is as it should be when it is ready to meet God at every turne, to joy when he calls for it, to mourne when he calls for that, to labour to know Gods meaning in every thing.

Again. God hath made the soule for a communion with himself, which communion is especially placed in the affections, which are the springs of all spirituall worship. Then the affections are well ordered, when we are fit to have communion with God, to love, joy, trust, to delight in him above all things. The affections are the inward movings of the soule, which then move best when they move us to God, not from him. They are the feet of the soule, whereby we walk with and before God. When we have our affections at such command, that we can take them off from any thing in the world, at such times as we are to have more neare

25

When we have the communion with God.

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com-

Cap. 9.

Gen. 22. 5.

communion with God in *heaven* or *pray-
er*, &c. As *Abraham* when he was to sa-
crifice, left whatsoever might hinder him
at the *bottoms of the Mount*. When we let
our affections so far into the things of the
world, as we cannot take them off when
we are to deal with God; it is a signe of
spirituall intemperancy. It is said of the
Israelites that they brought *Egypt* with
them into the wilderness; so many bring
the world into their hearts with them,
when they come before God.

3.

When our
affections
are subor-
dinate, none
boe

10 But because our affections are never
well ordered without judgment, as being
to follow, not to leade; It is an evidence
that the soul is in a fit temper, when there
is such a harmony in it, as that we judge
of things as they are, and affect as we
judge, and execute as we affect. This har-
mony within breeds uniformity and con-
stancy in our resolutions, so that there is
(as it were) an even thread drawn through
the whole course and tenour of our lives,
when we are not off and on, up and down.
It argues an ill state of body when it is
very hot, or very cold, or hot in one part,
and cold in another; so unevenness of
spirit argues a distemper; a wise mans life

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is of one colour like it self. The soul bred from heaven, so far as it is heavenly minded, desires to be (like heaven) above all storms, uniform, constant; not as things under the Sun, which are alwaies in changes, constant onely in inconstancy. Affections are as it were the winde of the soul, and then the soule is carried as it should be, when it is neither so becalmed that it moves not when it should, nor yet tossed with tempests to move disorderly. When it is so well balanced that it is neither lifted up nor cast down too much, but keepeth a steady course. Our affections must not rise to become unruly passions, for then as a river that overfloweth the banks they carry much slime and soile with them. Though affections be the winde of the soule, yet unruly passions are the storms of the soule, and will overturn all if they be not suppressed. The best (as we see in David here) if they doe not steere their hearts aright, are in danger of sudden gulfe. A Christian must neither be a dead sea, nor a raging sea.

Our affections are then in best temper, when they become so many graces of the Spirit, as when love is turned to a love

4.
When our
affections
become
graces.

Cap. 8.

5.
When fit
to per-
former
duties;

In case of
Gods dis-
honor, ex-
ceeding af-
fection is
no excess.

4.
When our
affections
become
excessive.

of God; joy, to a delight in the best things;
fear, to a feare of offending him more
than any creature; sorrow, to a sorrow for
sin, &c.

They are likewise in good temper, when
they move us to all duties of love and
mercy towards others; when they are not
shut, where they should be open, nor open
where they should be shut.

Yet there is one case wherein exceeding
affection is not over exceeding; As in an
extasie of zeale upon a sudden apprehen-
sion of Gods dishonor, and his cause trod-
den under foot. It is better in this case,
rather scarce to be our own men, than to
be calme or quiet. It is said of *Christ* and
David, that their hearts were eaten up
with a holy zeale for Gods house. In such
a case *Moses* unparalleled for his meeknesse,
was turned into an holy rage. The greatnesse
of the provocation, the excellency of the
object, and the weight of the occasion,
beares out the soule, not onely without
blame, but with great praise, in such seem-
ing distempers. It is the glory of a *Chri-
stian* to be carried with full faith, and as it
were with a spring-tide of affection. So
long as the stream of affection runneth

in

The Soules Conflict.

97

Cap. 8.

in the due channell, and if there be great occasions for great motions, then it is fit the affections should rise higher, as to burne with zeale, to be sick of love, to be more vile for the Lord, as *David*; to be counted one of our wis with *Saint Paul*, to further the cause of Christ and the good of souls.

Cant. 2. 5.

1 Sam. 6.

12.

The life of a Christian is a life of trouble.

Joh. 11. 13.

Thus we may see the life of a poore Christian in this world, 1. He is in great danger, if he be not troubled at all. 2. When he is troubled he is in danger to be over-troubled. 3. When he hath brought his soule in tune againe, he is subject to new troubles. Betwixt this ebbing and flowing there is very little quiet. Now because this cannot be done without a great measure of Gods Spirit, our help is to make use of that promise of giving the holy Ghost to them that aske it. To teach us when, how long, and how much to grieve: and when, and how long, and how much to rejoyce, the Spirit must teach the heart this, who as he moved upon the waters before the Creation, so he must move upon the waters of our souls, for we have not the command of our own hearts. Every naturall man is carried away with

Cap. 9.

his flesh and humours, upon which the Devil rides, and carries him whither he list; he hath no better counsellors than flesh and blood, and Satan counselling with them. But a godly man is not a slave to his carnall affections, but (as David here) labours to bring into captivity the first motions of sin in his heart.

CAP. IX.

Of the soules disquiets, Gods dealings, and power to contain our selves in order.

Obser. 1.

Moreover we see, that the soule hath disquiets proper to it self, besides those griefs of sympathy that arise from the body, for here the soule complains of the soule it self, as when it is out of the body it hath torments and joyes of its owne. And if these troubles of the soule be not well cured, then by way of fellowship and redundancy they will affect the outward man, and to the whole man shall be wrapped in misery.

Obser. 2.

From whence we further see, that God, when he will humble a man, needs not fetch forces from without, if he let but our owne hearts

hearts loose, we shall have trouble and worke enough, though we were as holy as David. God did not onely exercise him with a rebellious sonne out of his owne loynes, but with rebellious risings out of his owne heart. If there were no enemy in the world, nor devil in hell, we carry that within us, that if it be let loose, will trouble us more than all the world besides. Oh that the proud creature should exalt himself against God, and run into a voluntary course of provoking him, who cannot onely raise the humours of our bodies against us, but the passions of our mindes also to torment us! Therefore it is the best wisdom, not to provoke the great God, for *are we stronger than he*, that can raise our selves against our selves, and worke wonders not onely in the great world, but also in the little world, our soules and bodies, when he pleases.

1 Cor. 10.
22.

Obser. 3.

We see likewise hence a necessity of having something in the soule above it self, it must be partaker of a diviner nature than it self, otherwise, when the most refined part of our soules, the very spirit of our mindes is out of frame, what shall bring it in again? Therefore we must connective into

Cap. 9.

godly man, a double self, one which must be denied, the other which must deny; one that breeds all the disquiet, and another that stilleth what the other hath raised. The way to still the soule, as it is under our corrupt self, is not to parlee with it, and divide government for peace sake, as if we should gratifie the flesh in something, to redeem liberty to the spirit in other things; for we shall finde the flesh will be too encroaching. We must strive against it, not with subtilty and discourse, so much, as with peremptory violence silence it and vex it: An enemy that parlees will yeeld at length. Grace is nothing else but that blessed power, whereby as spirituall, we gaine upon our selves as carnall. Holy love is that which we gaine of self-love, and so joy, and delight, &c. Grace labours to win ground of the old man, untill at length it be all in all; Indeed we are never our selves perfectly, till we have wholly put off our selves: nothing should be at a greater distance to us, than our selves. This is the reason why carnall men that have nothing above themselves but their *corrupt self*, sink in great troubles, having nothing within to uphold them,

them, whereas a good man is wiser than himself, holier than himself, stronger than himself, there is something in him more than a man. There be evils that the spirit of man alone out of the goodnesse of nature cannot beare, but the spirit of man assisted with an higher spirit, will support and carry him through. It is a good triall of a mans condition to know what he esteems to be himself. A godly man counts the inner man, the sanctified part, to be himself, whereby he stands in relation to Christ and a better life. Another man esteems his contentment in the world, the satisfaction of his carnall desires, the respect he findes from men by reason of his parts, or something without him, that he is master of, this he counts himself, and by this he values himself, and to this he makes his best thoughts and endeavours serviceable; And of crosses in these things he is most sensible, and so sensible, that he thinks himself undone if he seeth not a present issue out of them.

That which most troubles a good man in all troubles, is himself, so far as he is un-
subdued; he is more disquieted with himself, than with all troubles out of himself, when

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when he hath gotten the better, once of himself, whatsoever falls from without, is light; where the Spirit is enlarged, it cares not much for outward bondage; where the Spirit is lightsome, it cares not much for outward darknesse; where the Spirit is settled, it cares not much for outward changes; where the Spirit is one with it self, it cannot beare outward breaches; where the Spirit is sound, it can beare outward sicknesse. Nothing can be very ill with us, when all is well within. This is the comfort of a holy man, that though he be troubled with himself, yet by reason of the Spirit in him which is his *better self*, he works out by degrees, what ever is contrary. As Spring-water being cleere of it self, works it self cleane, though it be troubled by something cast in; as the Sea will endure no poysonfull thing, but casts it upon the shore. But a carnall man is like a Spring corrupted, that cannot worke it self cleare, because it is wholly rained; his eye and light, is darknesse, and therefore no wonder if he seeth nothing. Sin lieth upon his understanding, and hinders the knowledge of it self; it lies close upon the will, and hinders the striving against it self.

True

1. True joy that is worth the owning; in which a man is taken into a higher condition, and made one with Christ, and esteems neither of himself nor others; as happy for any thing according to the flesh. 1. He is under the law and government of the Spirit, and so far as he is himself, works according to that principle. 2. He labours more and more to be transformed into the likeness of Christ, in whom he esteemeth that he hath his best being. 3. He esteems of all things that befall him, to be good or ill, as they further or hinder his best condition. If all be well for that, he counts himself well, whatsoever else befalls him.

Another man when he doth any thing that is good, acts not his owne part; but a goodly man when he doth good, is in his proper element; what another man doth for by-ends and reasons, that he doth from a new nature; which if there were no Law to compell, yet would move him to that which is pleasing to Christ. If he be drawn aside by passion or temptation, that he judgeth not to be himself; but taketh a holy revenge on himself for it, as being received and taken out from himself;

Cap. 9.

selfe; he thinks himselfe no *debtor*, nor to owe any service to his corrupt self. That which he plots and projects and workes for is, that Christ may rule every where, and especially in himself, for he is not his own but Christs, and therefore desires to be more and more emptied of himself, that Christ might be *all in, all in him*.

Thus we see what great use there is of dealing with our selves, for the better composing and setting of our soules. Which though it be a course without glory and ostentation in the world, as causing a man to retire inwardly into his owne breast, having no other witnesse but God and himself; and though it be likewise irksome to the flesh, as calling the soul home to it self, being desirous naturally to wander abroad, and be a stranger at home: Yet it is a course both good in it self, and makes the soule good.

For by this means the judgment is exercised and rectified, the will and affections ordered, the whole man put into an holy frame fit for every good action. By this the tree is made good, and the fruit cannot but be answerable; by this the soule it self is set in tune, whence there is a pleasant harmony

harmony in our whole conversation. Without this, we may doe that which is outwardly good to others, but we can never be good our selves. The first justice begins within, when there is a due subjection of all the powers of the soule to the spirit, as sanctified and guided by Gods Spirit; when justice and order is first established in the soule, it will appear from thence in all our dealings. He that is at peace in himself, will be peaceable to others, peaceable in his family, peaceable in the Church, peaceable in the State; The soule of a wicked man is in perpetuall sedition, being alwaies troubled in it selfe. It is no wonder if it be troublesome to others. Unity in ourselves is before union with others. To conclude this first part, concerning intercourse with our selves. As we desire to enjoy our selves, and to live the life of men, and of Christians, which is, to understand our waies: As we desire to live comfortably, and not to be weary of yielding to that sorrow which causeth death: As we desire to answer God and our selves, when we are to give an account of the inward tumults of our soules. As we

Vnit as an-
te unum
signa
ed sum
-707
signa
30

Cap. 10.

we desire to be vessels prepared for every
 good worke, and to have strength to un-
 dergoe any crosse. As we desire to have
 healthy souls, and to keep a *stronghold* with-
 in our selves. As we desire not onely to
 doe good, but to be good in our selves.
 So let us labour to quiet our soules, and
 often aske a reason of our selves. *Why do
 I not quiet my soule?* The first thing that
 is at peace in himself will be peaceable to
 others. *Cal. 12.* *Be ye as Christ, who
 was not without sin, but without sin.*
 The soule of a wicked man is in rebellion.
 To help us further herein, besides that
 which hath been formerly spoken, I
 We must take heed of building an
 ungrounded confidence of happiness for
 time to come, which makes us when
 changes come, 1. Unacquainted with
 them. 2. Takes away expectation of
 them. 3. And preparation for them.
 When any thing is strange and sudden,
 and lightes upon us unfamiliarly, and un-
 expected, it must needs put our spirits out
 of frame. It is good therefore to make
 all kinde of troubles familiar to us, in our
 thoughts at least, and this will break the
 force

Changes
 must be
 fore-
 thought
 of.

force of them. It is good to fence our soules beforehand against all assaults, as men use to keep out the Sea, by raising banks; and if a breach be made, to repair it presently.

Cap. 10.

We had need to maintaine a strong Garrison of holy Reasons against the assaults of strong passions; we may hope for the best, but feare the worst, and prepare to beare whatsoever. We say that a set dyet is dangerous, because variety of occasions will force us upon breaking of it: So in this world of changes we cannot resolve upon any certain condition of life, for upon alteration the minde is out of frame. We cannot say this or that trouble shall not befall; yet we may by help of the Spirit, say, nothing that doth befall, shall make me doe that which is unworthy of a Christian.

Heb. 4. 2.

Revel. 1. 4.

Caution.

That which others make easie by suffering, that a wise man maketh easie by thinking of beforehand. If we expect the worst, when it comes, it is no more than we thought of: If better befalls us, then it is the sweeter to us, the lesse we expected it. Our Saviour foretells the worst; In the world you shall have tribulation, therefore

Qua alii
dix patien-
do levia
faciunt, sa-
piens levia
facit dix co-
gitando.

Joh. 16.

33.

Cap. 10.

Heb. 4.9.

Revel. 14.

13.

Caution.

illa. an
 -asing nith
 aivel ob
 -n. amich
 aivel eniq
 -n nith pial
 .ob nith
 1 Sam. 27.

1.

fore look for it, but then he will not leave
 us. Satam deludes with many promises;
 but when the contrary falls out, he leaves
 his followers in their distresses. We desire
 peace and rest, but we seek it not in its
 own place. *There is a rest for Gods people,*
 but that is not here, nor yet; but it re-
 maines for them. *they rest from their la-*
bours; but that is after they are *dead in the*
Lord. There is no sound rest till then. Yet
 this caution must be remembered, that we
 shape not in our fancies such troubles as
 are never likely to fall out. It comes ei-
 ther from weakness or guiltiness, to feare
 shadows. We shall not need to make cros-
 ses; they will (as we say of foule weather)
 come before they be sent for. How ma-
 ny evils do people feare, from which they
 have no further hurt, then what is bred
 only by their causelesse feares. Nor yet if
 they be *probable,* must we think of them
 so as to be altogether so affected, as if un-
 doubtedly they would come. for so we
 give certaine strength to an uncertaine
 crosse, and usurp upon God, by anticipa-
 ting that which may never come to passe.
 It was rashnesse in David to say, *I shall to-*
day perish by the hand of Saul.

If they be such troubles, as will certainly come to passe, as parting with friends and contentments (at least) by death; then

1. *Thinke* of them so, as not to be much dismayed, but furnish thy heart with strength before-hand, that they may fall the lighter.

2. *Thinke* of them so, as not to give up the bucklers to passion, and lie open as a faire marke for any uncomfortable accident to strike to the heart; nor yet so thinke of them as to despise them, but to consider of Gods meaning in them, and how to take good by them.

3. *Thinke* of the things we enjoy, so as to moderate our enjoying of them, by considering there must be a parting, and therefore how we shall be able to beare it when it comes.

2. *If we desire* not to be overcharged with sorrow, when that which we fear is fallen upon us, we must then before-hand looke that our love to any thing in this world, shoot not so farre, as that, when the time of severing cometh, we part with so much of our hearts by that rent. Those that love too much, will always grieve too much. It is the greatnesse of our affections which causeth the sharpnesse of our afflictions.

Cap. 10.

afflictions. He that cannot abound with our pride and high-mindednesse, will not want without too much dejectednesse. Love is planted for such things as can return love: and make us better by loving them, wherein we shall satisfie our love to the full. It is pity so sweet an affection should be lost. So sorrow is for sin, and for other things as they make sinne the more bitter to us. The life of a Christian should be a meditation how to unloose his affections from inferiour things, he will easily die that is dead before in affliction. But this will never be unless the soul seeth something better than all things in the world, upon which it may bestow itself. In that measure our affections die in their excessive motion to things below, as they are taken up with the love and admiration of the best things. He that is much in heaven in his thoughts, is free from being tossed with tempests here below; the top of those mountains that are above the middle Region, are so quiet, as that the lightest things (as ashes) lie still and are not moved. The way to mortifie earthly members that bestir themselves in us, is to *minde things above*: The more the

Col. 3. 1.
& 5.

the waies of wisdom lead us on high by the
more we avoid the snares below.

In the uncertainty of all events being
labour to frame that contentment stand
from our owne selves; which the things
themselves will not yeeld; frame peace
by freeing our hearts from too much fear
and riches by freeing our hearts from cov-
etous desires. Frame a sufficiency out of
contentednesse; If the soule is full be out
of tune, & growd things will doe no more
good than a faire shoot to a gollye foot.

And seek not our selves abroad out of
our selves in the conceits of other men. A
man shall never live quietly, that hath not
learned to be set light by of others. He
that is little in his owne eyes, will not be
troubled to be little in the eyes of others.
Men that set too high a price upon them-
selves, when others will not come to their
price, are discontent. Those whose condi-
tion is above their worth, and their pride
above their condition, shall never want
sorrow, yet we must minde our authori-
ty and the Image of God in our places,
for that is Gods and not ours; and we
ought to to carry our selves as we ap-
prove our selves to their consciences.

Cap. 3.

3.

though we have not their good words;
Let none despise thy youth; faith Saint Paul
 to Timothy; *that thy strength be before them*
in thy strength have no doubt. It is not in
 our owne power what other men thinke
 or speake; but it is in our power (by Gods
 grace) to live so that none can thinke ill of
 us, but by standing, and none beleeveth ill
 but by too much credulity. *Job 23:12*
 When any thing seeth upon us,
 we must ebbe head, we mingle not our
 owne passions with it; we must neither
 bring sin on, nor mingle sin with the suffer-
 ings; for that will trouble the spirit more
 than the trouble itself. We are more to
 deale with our own hearts, than with the
 trouble in self. We are not hurri till our
 souls be hurri. God will not have it in the
 power of any creature to hurt our souls,
 but by our own reason against our
 selves. *Job 23:12* Therefore we should have our hearts
 in continuall jealousy; for they are ready
 to deceive the best. In suddaine encounter
 some sin doth many times discover
 itselfe; the seed whereof lyeth hid in our
 natures; which we thinke our selves very
 free from. Who would have thought the
 seeds

Cap. 10

2 Sam. 12.

9.

Mar. 26.

72.

seeds of iniquity had lurked in the
meek nature of Joseph. That the seeds of
murder had lurked in the just and helter-skelter
David? That the seeds of lechery and
had lyen hid in the religious affections of
Peter towards Christ? If passions break
out from us, which we are not naturally
enclined unto, and over which by grace
we have got a great conquest, how watch-
full need we be over our selves in these
things, which by temptation, custom, and con-
pany, we are carried unto, and what cause
have we to feare continually that we are
worse than we take our selves to be.

There are many unrighteous passions lie hid
in us, untill they be drawne out by some-
thing that meeteth with them, either
by way of opposition, as when the truth
of God spiritually unfolded, meets with
some beloved corruption, or sweetest big-
get, the force of Gun powder is not
known untill some spark light on it, and
oftentimes the stillest natures (if crossed)
discover the deepest corruptions. Some-
times it is drawn out by dealing with the
opposite spirits of other men. Often-
times retired men know not what lies hid
in themselves.

Cap. 10.

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.de. 21 M

.et

Luk 22. 3.

Job 1.

*Aperta per-
dunt odia
vindicta
loquunt.*

*Solve Leo-
nem &
senec.*

4.

1. Sentences by crosses, as many people
while the freshest & vigour of their spirits
lasteth, and while the flower of age, and a
full supply of all things continueth, seem
to be of a pleasing and calme disposition;
but afterwards when changes come, like
a wife, they are discovered. Then that
which in youth is unsubdued, openly ap-
pears.

2. Temptations likewise have a search-
ing power, to bring that to light in us
which was hidden before. Satan hath been
a winnow, & a sifter of old: he thought
if Job had been but touched in his body,
he would have cursed God to his face.

3. Some men out of policy conceal their
passions, untill they see some advantage
to bring out, as Esau smothered his hatred
untill his fathers death. When the restraint
is taken away, Men as we say, then they
solve in their passions naturall: unloose a
Tiger or a Lyon, and you know what
they will do.

4. Further, let us see more every day
into the state of our owne soules; what a
strange is in that so humble and swift a spi-
rit as the soule is, that can mount up to
heaven, and from thence come down into
the

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E I

the earth in an instant, should whilst it looks over all other things over-look it selfe: that it should be skilfull in the story (almost) of all times and places; and yet ignorant of the story of it selfe: that we should know what is done in the *Town* and *Country*, and beyond the *Sea*, and be ignorant of what is done at home in our own hearts: that we should live knowne to others; and yet die unknown to our selves: that we should be able to give account of any thing better than of our selves to our selves. This is the cause why we stand in our own light; why we think better of our selves than others, and better than is cause. This is that which hindreth all reformation; for how can we reform that which we are not willing to see, and so we lose one of the surest evidences of our sincerity, which is, a willingness to search into our hearts, and to be searched by others. A sincere heart will offer it self to tryally word and yad. And therefore let us list our actions, and our passions, and see what is *flesh* in them, and what is *spirit*, and so separate the *praiseworthy* from the *vile*. It is good likewise to consider what sin we were guilty of, be-

from ew
his shew
from shad
all to two

Cap. 10.

fore, which moved God to give us up to
excess in any passion, and wherein we
have grieved his Spirit; Passion will be
more moderate, when thus it knowes, it
must come to the tryall and censure. This
course will either make us weary of passi-
on, or else passion will make us weary of
this strict course. We shall find it the sa-
fest way to give our hearts no rest, till we
have wrought on them to purpose, and
gotten the mastery over them.

When the soule is inured to this dealing
with it self, it will learne the skill to com-
mand, and passions will be soon comman-
ded, as being inured to be examined and
checked. As we see dogs, and such like
domesticall creatures, that will not regard
a stranger, yet will be quieted in brawles
presently, by the voice of their Master, to
which they are accustomed. This fits us
for service. Unbroken spirits are like un-
broken horses, unfit for any use, untill
they be thorowly subdued.

And it were best to prevent (as much
as in us lieth) the very first risings, before
the soul be overcast. Passions are but little
motions at the first, but grow as Rivers
doe, greater and greater, the further they
are

5.
We must
crush the
first moti-
ons of sin.

are carried from their Spring. The first risings are the more to be looked unto, because there is most danger in them, and we have least care over them. Sin, like rust, or a Canker, will by little and little *eat out* all the graces of the soule. There is no staying when we are once down the hill, till we come to the bottome. *No sin but is easier kept out, than driven out.* If we cannot prevent wicked thoughts, yet we may deny them lodging in our hearts. It is our giving willing entertainment to sinfull motions, that increaseth guilt, and hindreth our peace. It is that which moveth God to give us up to a further degree of evill affections. Therefore what we are afraid to *doe* before men, we should be afraid to *think* before God. It would much further our peace to keep our *judgments* clear, as being the eye of the soule, whereby we may discern in every action and passion, what is good, and what is evill: as likewise to preserve tendernesse of heart, that may check us at the first, and not brook the least evill being discovered. When the heart begins once to be kindled, it is easie to smother the smokes of passion, which otherwise will smoke up in

Cap. 10.

to the head, and gather into so thick a cloud, as we shall lose the sight of our selves, and what is best to be done. And therefore *David* here labours to take up his heart at the first; his care was to crush the very first insurrections of his soule, before they came to break forth into open rebellion, stormes we know rise out of little gusts. Little risings neglected, cover the soul before we are aware. If we would check these risings, and stifle them in their birth, they would not breake out afterwards to the reproach of Religion, to the scandall of the weak, to the offence of the strong, to the grief of *Gods Spirit* in us, to the disturbance of our own spirits in doing good, and to the disheartning of us in troubling of our inward peace, and thereby weakning our assurance. Therefore let us stop beginnings as much as may be, and so soone as they begin to rise, let us begin to examine what raised them, and whither they are about to carry us. The way to be still, is to examine our selves first; And then censure what stands not with reason. As *David* doth, when he had given way to unbecoming thoughts of *Gods providence*, So *Isaiah*, saith he,

Psal. 4.

Psal. 73.
22.

was I, and as a beast before thee, and
Especially, then looke to these sinfull
firmings when thou art to deal with God.
I am to have communion with a God of
peace. What then do turbulent thoughts
and affections in my heart? I am to deale
with a patient God, why should I cherish
revengefull thoughts? *Abraham* drove
away the birds from the sacrifice, *Gen.*
15. 3. Troublesome thoughts like birds
will come before they be sent far, but
they should finde entertainment accom-
paigningly.

6. In all our grievances, let us looke to
something that may comfort us, as well
as discourage; looke to that we enjoy, as
well as that we want. As in prosperity
God mingles some crosses to chastise us, so
in all crosses there is something to comfort
us. As there is a vanity hid in the best
worldly good, so there is a blessing hid
in the worst worldly evil. God usually
maketh up that with some advantage in
another kinde, wherein we are inferior
to others. *Orbinate* in greater place, so
they are in greater danger. *Orbinate* be
richer, so their cares and sorrow be greater
than those of the world. may be risen in
faith

6.

Jam. 2. 5.

Cap. 10.

faith than they. The soule can better digest and master a low estate than a prosperous, and if under some abasement, it is in a lesse distance from God. Others are not so afflicted as we, then they have lesse experience of Gods gracious power than we. Others may have more healthy bodies, but soules lesse weaned from the world. We would not change conditions with them, so as to have their spirits with their condition. For one half of our lives, the meanest are as happy and free from cares, as the greatest Monarch: that is, whilst both sleep, and usually the sleep of the one, is sweeter than the sleep of the other. What is all that the earth can afford us, if God deny health? and this a man in the meanest condition may enjoy. That wherein one man differs from another, is but ritle, and but for a little time; Death levelleth all.

There is scarce any man, but the good he receives from God is more than the ill he feels, if our unthankfull hearts would suffer us to think so. Is not our health more than our sickness? doe we not enjoy more than we want? I meane, of the things that are necessary: Are not

OUR

our good daies more than our euill : but we would goe to heauen upon Roses, and usually one crosse is more taken to heart, than an hundred blessings. So unkindly we deale with God. Is God indebted to us? doth he owe us any thing? those that deserve nothing, should be content with any thing.

We should looke to others as good as our selves (as well as to our selves) and then we shall see it is not our owne case onely : who are we that we should looke for an exempted condition from those troubles which Gods dearest children are addicted unto?

Thus when we are surprised contrary to our looking for and liking, we should study rather how to exercise some grace, than give way to any passion. Thinke, now is a time to exercise our patience, our wisdom, and other graces. By this means we shall turne that to our greatest advantage which Satan intendeth greatest hurt to us by. Thus we shall not onely master every condition, but make it seruiceable to our good. If nature teach Bees, not onely to gather hony out of sweet flowers, but out of bitter : Shall not grace teach us

Cap. 10.

7.

us to draw even out of the bitterest condition, something to better our soules. We learne to tame all creatures, even the wildest, that we may bring them to our use; and why should we give way to our owne unruly passions?

7. It were good to have in our eye, the beauty of a well ordered soule, and we should thinke that nothing in this world is of sufficient worth to put us out of frame. The sanctified soule should be like the sun in this, which though it worketh upon all these inferior bodies, and cheriseth them by light and influence; yet is not moved nor wrought upon by them againe, but keepeth its owne lustre and distance. So our spirits being of a heavenly nature, should rule other things beneath them, and not be ruled by them. It is a holy state of soule to be under the power of nothing beneath it self; for as we liue, then consider, Is this matter worth the loss of my quiet? What we esteem, what we love, what we love, we labour for, and therefore let us esteem highly of these same temper, whereby we both enjoy our God, and our selves, and know how to tame all things else. It is against

nature for inferiour things to rule that, which the wise Disposer of all things hath set above them. We owe the flesh neither suit nor service, we are no *debtors* to it.

The more we set before the soule that quiet estate in heaven, which the soules of perfect men now enjoy, and it self ere long shall enjoy there; the more it will be in love with it, and endeavour to attaine unto it. And because the soule never worketh better, than when it is raised up by some strong and sweet affection, let us look upon our nature as it is in Christ, in whom it is pure, sweet, calme, meek, every way lovely. This sight is a changing sight, love is an affection of imitation, we affect a likenesse to him we love. Let us learne of Christ to be humble and meek, and then we shall finde rest to our soules. The setting of an excellent idoe and platforme before us, will raise and draw up our soules higher, and make us sensible of the least moving of spirit, that shall be contrary to that, the attaineing whereof we have in our desires. We with hardly attaine to meane things, that set not before him higher perfection. Naturally we love to see symmetry & proportion,

*Anima
nunquam
melius a-
git, quam
ex imperio
alicuius in-
signis affe-
ctus.*

Mar. 11.
29.

AT 10 1
EE

Cap. 10

tion, even in a dead picture, and are much taken with some curious peece. But why should we not rather labour to keep the affections of the soule in due proportion? Seeing a meek and well ordered soule is not onely lovely in the sight of men and Angels, but is much set by, by the great God himself. But now the greatest care of those that set highest price upon themselves is, how to compose their outward carriage in some gracefull manner, never studying how to compose their spirits, and rather how to cover the deformity of their passions than to cure them. Whence it is that the foulest inward vices are covered with the fairest vizards, and so make this the worse, all this is counted the best breeding.

The Hebrews placed all their happiness in peace, and when they would comprise much in one word, they would wish peace. This was that the Angels brought down from heaven, at the birth of Christ. Now peace riseth out of quietnesse and order, and God that is the God of peace, is the God of order first. What is health, but when all the members are in their due posture, and all the humours in

There
must be an
uniformity
in the lives
of Christi-
ans.

8

a settled quiet? Whence ariseth the beauty of the world, but from that comely order wherein every creature is placed; the more glorious and excellent creatures above, and the lesse below? So it is in the soule; the best constitution of it is when by the Spirit of God it is so ordered, as that all be in subjection to the Law of the minde. What a sight were it for the feet to be where the head is, and the earth to be where the heaven is, to see all turned upside down? And to a spirituall eye it seems as great a deformity, to see the soul to be under the rule of sinfull passions.

Comeliness riseth out of the fit proportion of divers members to make up one body, when every member hath a beauty in it self, and is likewise well suited to other parts; A faire face and a crooked body, comely upper parts, and the lower parts uncomely, suit not well, because comeliness stands in oneness, in a fit agreement of many parts to one; when there is the head of a man, and the body of a beast, it is a monster in nature; And is it not as monstrous for to have an understanding head, and a fierce untamed heart? It cannot but raise up a holy indignation

K

dignation

Cap. 10.

dignation in us against these *risings*, when we consider how unbecoming they are, What doe these base passions in a heart dedicated to God, and given up to the government of his Spirit? What an indignity is it for Princes to goe a foot, and servants on horse-back? for those to rule, whose place is to be ruled? as being good attendants, but bad guides. It was *Chams* curse to be a *servant of servants*.

8.

8. This must be strengthened with a strong *self-deniall*, without which there can be no good done in Religion.

There be two things that most trouble us in the way to heaven; corruption within us, and the crosse without us; that which is within us must be denied, that that which is without us may be endured. Otherwise we cannot follow him by whom we looke to be saved. The gate, the entrance of Religion, is narrow; we must strip our selves of our selves before we can enter; if we bring any ruling lust to Religion, it will prove a bitter root of some grosse sin, or of apastasic and finall desperation.

Christians
must deny
themselves

Joh. 12. 43.

Those that sought the *praise of men*, more than the *praise of God*, could not believe,

Cap. 10.

Mat. 19.

22.

Mat. 23.

23.

Rom. 8.

Mic. 6.

lieve, because that lust of ambition would, when it should be crossed, draw them away. The young man thought it better for Christ to lose a Disciple, than that he should *lose his possession*, and therefore *went away* as he came: The *third ground* came to nothing, because the Plough had not gone deep enough to break up the roots, whereby their hearts were fastned to earthly contentments. This self-deniall we must carry with us through all the parts of Religion, both in our active and passive obedience; for in obedience there must be a subjection to a superiour, but corrupt self, *neither is subject, nor can be*, it will have an oare in every thing, and maketh every thing, yea, Religion serviceable to it self. It is the Idol of the world, or rather the god that is set highest of all in the soule; and so God himself is made but an Idol. It is hard to deny a friend who is another self, harder to deny a wife that lyeth in the bosome, but most hard to deny our selves. Nothing so neer us as our selves to our selves, and yet nothing so farre off. Nothing so deare, and yet nothing so malicious and troublesome. Hypocrites would part with the

Cap. 11.

fruit of their body, sooner than the sinne of their soules.

CAP. XI.

Signes of victory over our selves, and of a subdued spirit.

Quest.

But how shall we know, whether we have by grace got the victory over our selves or not?

Answ.

1.

Answer, If in good actions we stand not so much upon the credit of the action, as upon the good that is done. What we doe as unto God, we look for acceptance from God. It was *Jonas* his fault to stand more upon his owne reputation, than the glory of Gods mercy. It is a prevailing signe, when though there be no outward encouragements: nay, though there be discouragements, yet we can rest in the comfort of a good intention. For usually inward comfort is a note of inward sincerity. *Jesus* must be seen, or else all is lost.

1 King. 10.

16.

2.

2. It is a good evidence of some prevailing, when upon Religious grounds we can crosse our selves in those things unto which

which our hearts stand most affected, this sheweth we reserve God his own place in our hearts.

3.

3. When being privie to our owne inclination and temper, we have gotten such a supply of spirit, as that the *grace* which is contrary to our temper appears in us. As oft we see, none more patient, than those that are naturally enclined to intemperancie of passion, because naturall pronenesse maketh them jealous over themselves. Some, out of feare of being over much moved, are not moved so much as they should be: This jealousie stirreth us up to a carefull use of all helps, Where grace is helped by nature, there a little grace will go farre, but where there is much untowardnesse of nature, there much grace is not so well discerned. *Some wines need much sweetning*; And that is most spirituall which hath least help from nature, and is won by prayer and paines.

4.

2 Sam. 12.

4.

4. When we are not partiall when the things concerne our selves. *David* could allow himself another mans wife, and yet judgeth another man worthy of death for taking away a *poore mans lambe*. Men usually favour themselves too much, when

Cap. II.

they are Chancellors in their owne cause, and measure all things by their private interest. He hath taken a good degree in Christs Schoole, that hath learned to forget himself here.

5.

5. It is a good signe, when upon discovery of self-seeking we can gaine upon our corruption, and are willing to search and to be searched, what our inclination is, and where it faileth. That which we favour, we are tender of, it must not be touched. A good heart, when any corruption is discovered by a searching Ministry, is affected as if it had found out a deadly enemy. Touchinesse and passion argues guilt.

6.

6. This is a signe of a mans victory over himself, when he loves health and peace of body and minde, with a supply of all needfull things, chiefly for this end, that he may with more freedome of spirit serve God in doing good to others. So soone as grace entreth into the heart, it frameth the heart to be in some measure publique: and thinks it hath not its end, in the bare enjoying of any thing, untill it can improve what it hath for a further end. Thus to seek our selves is to deny

Cap. 21.

deny our selves, and thus to deny our selves, is truly to seek our selves. It is no self-seeking, when we care for no more than that, without which we cannot comfortably serve God. When the soule can say unto God, Lord as thou wouldst have me serve thee in my place, so grant me such a measure of health and strength, wherein I may serve thee.

Object.

But what if God thinks it good, that I shall serve him in weaknesse, and in want, and suffering.

Ans.

Then, it is a comfortable signe of gaining over our owne wills, when we can yeeld our selves to be disposed of by God, as knowing best what is good for us. There is no condition but therein we may exercise some grace, and honor God in some measure. Yet because some enlargement of condition is ordinarily that estate wherein we are best able to do good in; we may in the use of meanes desire it, and upon that, resigne up our selves wholly unto God, and make his will our will, without exception or reservation, and care for nothing more than we can have with his leave and love. This Job had exercised his heart unto; whereupon in that

Cap. 10.
Job 2.

great change of condition, *he sinned not*, that is, fell not into the sins incident to that dejected and miserable state, into sins of rebellion and discontent. He carried his crosses comely, with that staydnesse and resignednesse, which became a holy man.

Neh. 2. 3.

7. It is further a cleare evidence of a spirit subdued, when we will discover the truth of our affection towards God and his people, though with censure of others. *David* was content to endure the censure of neglecting the state and Majesty of a King, out of joy for setting the Arke. *Nehemiah* could not dissemble his grief for the ruines of the Church, though in the Kings presence: It is a comfortable signe of the waisting of self-love, when we can be at a point what becomes of our selves, so it goe well with the cause of God and the Church.

How to
get to the
mastery of
our selves.

Now the way to prevail still more over our selves, (as when we are to doe or suffer any thing, or withstand any person in a good cause, &c.) is, not to thinke that we are to deale with men, yea, or with Devils so much as with our selves. The Saints resisted their enemies to death, by resisting

resisting their owne corruptions first: if we once get the victory over our selves, all other things are conquered to our ease. All the hurt Satan and the world doe us, is, by correspondency with our selves. All things are so farre under us, as we are above our selves.

*Te vince
mundus tibi
victus est,
&c.*

For the further subduing of our selves, it is good to follow sin to the first Hold and Castle, which is corrupt nature; The streams will lead us to the Spring head: Indeed the most apparent discovery of sin is in the outward carriage; we see it in the fruit before in the root; as we see grace in the expression before in the affection: But yet we shall never hate sinne thorowly, untill we consider it in the poysoned root from whence it ariseth.

That which least troubles a naturall man, doth most of all trouble a true Christian; A naturall man is sometimes troubled with the fruit of his corruption, and the consequents of guilt and punishment that attend it; but a true-hearted Christian, with corruption it selfe; this drives him to complaine with *S^t Paul, O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me, not from the members onely, but from this body*

Rom. 7.

Cap. 11.

body of death? Which is as noysome to to my soule, as a dead carrion is to my senses; which together with the members, is marvellously nimble and active; and hath no daies, or houres, or minutes of rest; alwaies laying about it to enlarge it self, and like spring water, which the more it issueth out, the more it may.

It is a good way, upon any particular breach of our inward peace, presently to have recourse to that which breeds and fomentes all our disquiet. Lord! what doe I complaine of this my unruly passion? I carry a *nature* about me subject to break out continually upon any occasion; Lord! strike at the root, and drie up the fountaine in me. Thus *David* doth arise from the guilt of those two foule sins, of *Murther* and *Adultery*, to the sin of his nature, the root it self; As if he should say, Lord! it is not these actuall sins that defile me onely; but if I look back to my first conception, I was tainted in the spring of my nature.

Psal. 51.

This is that here which put *David's* soule so much out of frame; For from whence was this contradiction? & whence was this contradiction so unwearied, in making

making head again and again against the checks of the Spirit in him? Whence was it that *Corruption* would not be said Nay? Whence were these *sudden* and unlookt-for objections of the *flesh*? But from the remainder of old *Adam* in him, which like a *Michol* within us is either *scorning* at the waies of God; or as *Sab's wife*, fretting and *thwarting* the motions of Gods Spirit in us; which prevails the more, because it is homebred in us: whereas holy motions are strangers to most of our souls. Corruption is loth that a *new commer* in should take so much upon him as to *controule*: As the *Sodomites* thought much that *Lot* being a *stranger* should intermeddle amongst them. If God once leave us as he did *Hozekiah* to trie what is in us, what should he finde but darknesse, rebellion, unrulinesse, doublings, &c. in the best of us? This *flesh* of ours hath principles against all Gods principles, and lawes against all Gods lawes, and reasons against all Gods reasons. Oh! if we could but one whole houre seriously think of the impure issue of our hearts, it would bring us down upon our knees in humiliation before God. But we can never whilst

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Gen. 19. 9.

Cap. 11.

we live, so thoroughly as we should, see into the depth of our deceitfull hearts, nor yet be humbled enough for what we see; For though we speak of it and confesse it, yet we are not so sharpened against this corrupt flesh of ours, as we should. How should it humble us, that the seeds of the vilest sin, even of the *Sin against the holy Ghost* is in us? and no thank to us that they break not out. It should humble us to heare of any great enormous sin in another man, considering what our own nature would proceed unto if it were not restrained. We may see our owne nature in them as *face answering face*; If God should take his *Spirit* from us, there is enough in us to defile a whole world; And although we be ingrafted into Christ, yet we carry about us a relish of the old stock still. *David* was a man of a good naturall constitution; and for grace, a man after Gods owne heart, and had got the better of himself in a great measure, and had learned to overcome himself in matter of revenge, as in *Sauls* case: yet now we see the vessel is shaken a little, and the dregs appeare that were in the bottome before. Alas! we know not our owne hearts, till we

1 Sam. 24.
6.

we plow with Gods heifer, till his Spirit bringeth a light into our souls. It is good to consider how this impure *spring* breaks out *diversly* in the divers conditions we are in; there is no estate of life, nor no action we undertake, wherein it will not put forth it self to defile us: It is so full of poyson that it taints whatsoever we doe, both our natures, conditions, and actions. In a *prosperous* condition (like *David*) we think we *shall never be moved*. Under the *Crosse* the *soule* is *troubled* and drawn to murmur, and to be sullen, and sink down in discouragement, to be in a heat almost to blasphemy, to be weary of our callings, and to quarrell with every thing in our way. See the folly and fury of most men in this, for us silly worms to contradict the great God: And to whose perill is it? Is it not our owne? Let us gather our selves with all our wit and strength together: Alas! what can we doe but provoke him, and get more stripes? We may be sure he will deale with us, as we deale with our children, if they be froward and unquiet for lesser matters, we will make them crie and be sullen for something: Refractory stubborne

Psal. 30. 6.

CAP. II.

borne horses are the more spurred, and yet shake not off the rider.

CAP. XII.

Of originall righteousness, naturall corruption, Satans joyning with it, and our duty thereupon.

§. 1.

BUT here marke a plot of spirituall treason; Satan joyning with our corruption, setteth the wit on worke to perswade the soule, that this inward rebellion is not so bad, because it is naturall to us, as a condition of nature, rising out of the first principles in our creation, and was curbed in by the bridle of originall righteousness, which they would have accessory and supernaturall, and therefore alledge that *concupiscence* is lesse odious & more excusable in us, and so no great danger in yeelding and betraying our Soules unto it, and by that means perswading us, that that which is our deadliest enemy, hath no harme in it, nor meaneth any to us.

Most of the most dangerous opinions of Popery, as Justification by *works*, state of *perfection*, *merit*, *satisfaction*, *supererogation*, &c. spring from hence that they have

slight conceits of concupiscence as a condition of nature; Yet some of them as *Michael Bayus* professor at *Louvain*, &c. are found in the present

This

Cap. 12.
Answ.
Gen. 1.

This rebellion of lusts against the understanding, is not naturall, as our nature came out of Gods hands at the first: For this being evil and the cause of evil, could not come from God who is good, and the cause of all good, and nothing but good: who upon the creation of all things pronounced them *good*, and after the creation of man pronounced of all things that they were *very good*. Now that which is ill and very ill, cannot be seated at the same time in that which is good and *very good*: God created man at the first, *right*, he of himself *sought out many inventions*. As God beautified the heaven with stars, and decked the earth with variety of plants, and herbs, and flowers, So he adorned man his prime creature here below, with all those endowments that were fit for a happy condition, and originall righteousness was fit and due to an originall and happy condition. Therefore as the Angells were created with all Angelicall perfections, and as our bodies were created in an absolute temper of all the humours; so the soule was created in that sweet harmony wherein there was no discord, as an instrument in tune fit to be

Cap. 12.

be moved to any duty; as a cleane neat glasse the soule represented Gods image and holinesse.

§. 2.

Therefore it is so farre, that concupiscence should be *naturall*, that the contrary to it, namely, *Righteousnesse*, wherein *Adam* was created, was naturall to him; though it were planted in mans nature by God, and so in regard of the cause of it, was supernaturall, yet because it was agreeable to that happy condition, without which he could not subsist, in that respect it was naturall, and should have been derived (if he had stood) together with his nature, to his posterity. As heat in the ayre, though it hath its first impression from the heat of the Sun, yet is naturall, because it agreeth to the nature of that element: and though man be compounded of a spirituall and earthly substance, yet it is naturall that the *baser* earthly part should be subject to the *Superiour*, because where there is different degrees of worthinesse, it is fit there should be a subordination of the meaner to that which is in order higher. The body *naturally* desires food and bodily contentments, yet

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in a man indued with *reason*, this desire is governed so as it becomes not inordinate: A beast sins not in its appetite, because it hath no power above to order it. A man that lives in a solitary place farre remote from company, may take his liberty to live as it pleaseth him; but if he comes to live under the government of some well ordered City, then he is bound to submit to the lawes, and customes of that City, under penalty, upon any breach of order: so the risings of the soule, howsoever in other creatures they are not blameable, having no commander in themselves, above them, yet in man they are to be ordered by reason and judgment.

Therefore it cannot be, that *concupiscence* should be *naturall*, in regard of the state of creation; It was *Adams* sin which had many sinnes in the wombe of it, that brought this disorder upon the Soule; *Adams* person first corrupted our nature, and nature being corrupted, corrupts our persons, and our persons being corrupted, encrease the corruption of our nature, by *custome* of sinning, which is another nature in us; as a streamie the farther it runs from the spring-head, the more it enlargeth its
L
chanell,

Cap. 12.

chanell, by the running of lesser rivers into it, untill it empties it self into the Sea; So corruption, till it be over-powred by *gnace*, swelleth bigger and bigger, so that though this disorder was not naturall, in regard of the first creation, yet since the *fall* it is become *naturall*, even as we call that which is common to the whole kind, & propagated from parents to their children, to be naturall; So that it is both naturall and against nature, *naturall* now, but against *nature* in its first perfection.

- I. And because corruption is *naturall* to us, therefore 1. we *delight* in it, whence it comes to passe, that our soules are carried along in an easie current, to the committing of any sinne without opposition.
2. Because it is *naturall*, therefore it is unwearied & restless, as light bodies are not wearied in their motion upwards, nor hea-
vie bodies in their motion downwards, nor a streame in its running to the Sea, because it is *naturall*: Hence it is that the *old man* is never tired in the *works of the flesh*, nor never drawn drie. When men cannot act sin, yet they will love sin, and act it over again by pleasing thoughts of it, and by sinfull speculation suck out the
delight

delight of sin; and are grieved, not for their sin, but because they want strength and opportunity to commit it; If sinne would not leave them, they would never leave sin. This corruption of our nature is not wrought in us by reason and persuasions, for then it might be satisfied with reasons, but it is in us by way of a naturall inclination, as iron is carried to the Loadstone; And till our natures be altered, no reason will long prevaile, but our sinfull disposition as a stream stopp for a little while, will break out with greater violence. 3. Being naturall it needs no help, as the earth needs no tillage to bring forth weeds. When our corrupt nature is carried contrary to that which is good, it is carried of it self. As when Satan lies or murders, it comes from his owne cursed nature; and though Satan joyneth with our corrupt nature, yet the pronesse to sin, and the consent unto it, is of our selves.

§. 3.

But how shall we know, that Satan joynes with our nature, in those actions unto which nature it self is prone?

Then Satan adds his help, when our

L 2

nature

3.

Quest.

Ans.

Cap. 12.

*Nemo se
palpet de
suo, Satan
est, &c.
Aug.*

nature is carried more eagerly then ordinary to sin; as when a stream runs violently, we may know that there is not onely the tide, but the winde that carrieth it.

So in sudden and violent rebellions, it is Satan that pusheth on *nature* left to it self of God. A stone falls downward by its own weight, but if it falls very swiftly we know it is throwne downe by an outward mover. Though there were no Devil, yet our corrupt *nature* would act Satans part against it selfe, it would have a supply of wickednesse, (as a Serpent doth poyson.) from it self, it hath a spring to feed it.

But that man whilst he lives *here* is not altogether excluded from hope of happinesse, and hath a *nature* not so large and capable of sin as *Satans*; whereupon he is not so obstinate in hating God, and working mischief as he, &c. Otherwise there is for *kinde* the same *curst* disposition, and *malice* of nature against true goodnesse in man, which is in the *devils* and damned spirits themselves.

It is no mitigation of sin, to plead it is *naturall*, for naturall diseases (as leprosies) that are derived from Parents, are most dangerous

dangerous, and least curable ; Neither is this any excuse, for because as it is *natural*, so it is *voluntary*, not onely in *Adam*, in whose loines we were, and therefore sinned; but likewise in regard of *our selves*, who are so far from stopping the course of sin either in our selves or others, that we feed and strengthen it, or at least give more way to it, and provide lesse against it than we should, untill we come under the government of grace ; and by that meanes, we justifie *Adams* sin, and that corrupt estate that followeth upon it, and shew, that if *we* had been in *Adams* condition our selves, *we* would have made that ill choice which hee made. And though this corruption of our nature be necessary to us, yet it is no violent necessity from an outward cause, but a necessity that wee willingly pull upon our selves, and therefore ought the more to humble us ; for the more necessarily we sin, the more voluntarily, and the more *voluntarily*, the more necessarily ; the will putting it self *voluntarily* into these fetters of sin. *Necessity* is no plea, when the *will* is the immediate cause of any action ; Mens hearts tell them they might rule

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their

*Suspirabam
ligatus, non
ferro ali-
quo, sed
mea ferrea
voluntate;
velle meum
tenebat ini-
micus, &
inde mihi
catenam se-
cevit. Aug.
Confess.*

Cap. 12,
Quicquid
sibi impera-
vit animus,
obtinuit.
Seneca.

Cesset vo-
luntas pro-
pria, & non
erit infer-
nus.

their *desires* if they would ; For tell a man of any *dish* which he liketh , that there is poyson in it, and he will not meddle with it ; So tell him that *death* is in that *sinne* which he is about to commit, and he will *abstaine* if he believe it be so ; if he believe it not, it is his *voluntary* unbelief and atheisme.

If the will would use that sovereignty it should, and could at the first, we should be altogether freed from this necessity. Men are not damned because they *cannot* do better, becaus^t they *will* but do no better ; If there were no *will*, there would be no hell ; For men *willingly* submit to the rule and law of sin, they plead for it, and like it so well, as they hate nothing so much as that which any way withstan-
derth those lawlesse lawes.

Those that think it their happinesse to doe what they will, that they might be *free*, crosse their owne desires, for this is the way to make them most perfect *slaves*. When our will is the next immediate cause of sinne, and our consciences beare witnessse to us that it is so ; then conscience is ready to take Gods part in accusing our selves : Our consciences tell

us to our faces that we might doe more than we doe to hinder sin, and that when we sin, it is not through weaknesse, but out of the wickednesse of our nature.

Our Consciences tell us that we sin not onely willingly, but often with delight, (so far forth as we are not subdued by grace, or awed by something above us) and that we esteem any restraint to be our misery. And where by grace the *will* is strengthened, so, that it yeelds not a full consent, yet a gracious soule is humbled even for the sudden risings of corruption that prevent deliberation. As here *David*, though he withstood the risings of his heart, yet he was troubled, that he had so vile a heart that would rise up against God, and therefore takes it downe. Who is there that hath not cause to be humbled, not onely for his corruption, but that he doth not resist with that strength, nor labour to prevent it with that diligence, which his heart tells him he might?

We cannot have too deep apprehensions of this *breeding* sin, the *mother* and nurse of all abominations; for the more we consider the height, the depth, the breadth and length of it, the more shall

Cap. 12.
Ephes. 3.
18.

we be humbled in our selves, and magnifie the *height*, the *depth*, the *breadth*, and the *length* of Gods mercy in Christ. The favourers of *nature* are alwaies the enemies of *grace*; This which some thinke and speake so weakly and faintly of, is a worse enemy to us than the devil himself; a more neer, a more restlesse, a more traiterous enemy, for by intelligence with it the Devil doth us all the hurt he doth, and by it maintaines forts in us against goodnesse. This is that which either by discouragement or contrariety hinders us *from* good: or else by deadnesse, tediousnesse, distractions, or corrupt aimes hinders us *in doing* good: this putteth us on to evill, and abuseth what is good *in us*, or *from us*, to cover or colour sin; and furnishes us with reasons either to maintaine what is evill, or shifts to translate it upon false causes, or fences to arme us against whatsoever shall oppose us in our wicked waies: Though it neither can nor will be good, yet it would be thought to be so by others, and enforces a conceit upon it self that it is good. It imprisons and keeps down all *light* that may discover it, both within it self, and without it self, if

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it lie in its power : It flatters it self, and would have all the world flatter it too, which if it doth not, it frets ; especially if it be once discovered and crossed : hence comes all the plotting against goodnesse, that sin may reigne without controule. Is it not a lamentable case that man, who out of the very principles of nature cannot but desire happinesse and abhorre misery, yet should be in love with eternall misery in the causes of it, and abhor happinesse in the waies that leade unto it ? This sheweth us what a wonderfull deordination and disorder is brought upon mans nature ; For every other creature is naturally carried to that which is helpfull unto it, and shunneth that which is any way hurtfull and offensive ; Onely man is in love with his owne bane, and fights for those lusts that fight against his soule.

§ 4.

Our duty is, 1. to labour to see this sinfull disposition of ours, not onely as it is discovered in the Scriptures, but as it discovers it self in our own hearts ; this must be done by the light & teaching of Gods Spirit, who knows us and all the turnings and windings and by-waies of our souls, better

Six-fold
duty in re-
spect of
naturall
corrupti-
on.

I.

Cap. 12.

2.

better than we know our selves. We must see it as the most odious and lothsome thing in the world, making our *natures* contrary to Gods pure nature, and of all other duties making us most indisposed to *spirituall* duties, wherein we should have neereſt communion with God; because it seizeth on the very spirits of our mindes.

2. We should look upon it, as worse than any of those filthy streams that come from it, nay than all the impure issues of our lives together; there is more fire in the fornace than in the sparkles; There is more poyson in the *root* than in all the branches; for if the streame were stopt, and the branches cut off, and the sparkles quenched, yet there would be a perpetuall supply; as in good things, the cause is better than the effect; so in ill things the cause is worse. Every fruit should make this poysonfull *root* more hatefull to us, & the root should make us hate the *fruit* more, as coming from so bad a root, as being worse in the cause, than in it self; the *affection* is worse than the *action*, which may be forced or counterfeited. We crie out upon particular sins, but are not humbled as we should be for our impure

Evils of
not bewail-
ling our
corrupt
nature.

The Soules Conflict.

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pure dispositions; Without the sight of which there can be no *sound repentance* arising from the deep and through consideration of sin; no desire to be *new moulded*, without which we can never enter into so holy a place as heaven; no *self-denial* till we see the best things in us are enmity against God; no high prizing of Christ, without whom our natures, our persons, and our actions are abominable in Gods sight; nor any solid peace settled in the soule; which peace ariseth not from the ignorance of our corruption, or compounding with it, but from sight and hatred of it, and strength against it.

3. Consider the *spiritualnesse* and large extent of the law of God, together with the curse annexed, which forbids not only particular sins, but *all* the kindes, degrees, occasions, and furtherances of *sin* in the whole breadth and depth of it, and our very *nature* it self so far as it is corrupted; For want of which, we see many *alive without the law*, joviall and merry from ignorance of their misery, who if they did but once see their natures and lives in *that glasse*, it would take away that liveliness and courage from them, and make them

Cap. 13.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

3.

Rom. 7.2.

Cap. 12.

them vile in their owne eyes; Men usually *look* themselves in the lawes of the *State* wherein they live, and think themselves good enough, if they are free from the danger of *penall* statutes; *this* glasse discovers *onely* foule spots, grosse scandals, and breakings out: Or else they judge of themselves by *parts* of *nature*, or common *grace*, or by outward conformity to *Religion*, or else by that light they have to guide themselves in the affaires of this life, by their faire and civill carriage, &c. and thereupon *live* and *die* without any sense of the *power* of *godlinesse*, which begins in the right knowledge of *our selves*, and ends in the right knowledge of God. The *spiritualnesse* and *purity* of the *law* should teach us to consider the purity and *holinesse* of *God*; the bringing of our soules into whose presence will make us to *abhor our selves* (with *Job*) *in dust and ashes*; Contraries are best seen by setting one neer the other; Whilst we look only on our selves, and upon others amongst whom we live, we thinke our selves to be some-body. It is an evidence of some sincerity wrought in the soule, not to shun that light which may let us see the foule corners

Job 42.6.

corners of our hearts and lives.

4. The consideration of this likewise should enforce us to carry a double guard over our soules: *David* was very watchfull, yet we see here he was surprized unawares by the sudden rebellion of his heart; we should observe our hearts as governours doe rebels and mutinous persons: Observation awes the heart; We see to what an excess sin groweth in those that deny themselves nothing, nor will be denied in any thing; who if they may doe what they will, will doe what they may; who turne *liberty* into licence, and make all their abilities and advantages to doe good, contributory to the commands of overruling and unruly lusts.

Were it not that God partly by his power suppresseth, and partly by his grace subdueth the disorders of mans nature for the good of society, and the gathering of a Church upon earth; *Corruption* would swell to that excesse, that it would overturne and confound all things together with it self. Although there be a *common corruption* that cleaves to the nature of all men in generall, as men, (as distrust in God, self-love, a carnall and worldly disposition,

Cap. 12.

sition, &c.) yet God so ordereth it, that in some there is an *ebbe* and decrease, in others (God justly leaving them to themselves) a *flow* and encrease of sinfulness, even beyond the bounds of ordinary corruption, whereby they become worse than themselves, either like beasts in sensuality, or like Devils in spirituall wickedness; though all be blinde in spirituall things, yet some are more *blinded*: though all be hard hearted, yet some are more *hardened*: though all be corrupt in evill courses, yet some are more *corrupted*: and sink deeper into rebellion than others.

Sometimes God suffers this corruption to break out in *evill* men, yea even in his *owne* children, that they may know themselves the better, and because *sometimes* corruption is weakned not onely by smothering, but by having a vent, whereupon *grace* stirs up in the soule a *fresh* hatred and revenge against it; and lets us see a necessity of having *whole* Christ, not only to pardon sin, but to purge & cleanse our sinfull natures. But yet that which is ill in it self, must not be done for the good that comes by it by accident; this must be a comfort after our surprisalls, not an encouragement before.

Caution.

5. And

5. And because the *divine nature*, wrought in us by *divine truth*, together with the *Spirit of God*, is the onely counter-poyson against all sin, and whatsoever is contrary to God in us, therefore we should labour that the truth of God may be grafted in our hearts, that so all the powers of our souls may relish of it, that there may be a sweet agreement betwixt the soule and all things that are spirituall, that truth being ingrafted in our hearts, we may be ingrafted into Christ, and grow up in him, and put him on more and more, and be changed into his likenesse. Nothing in heaven or earth will worke out corruption, and change our dispositions, but the *Spirit of Christ*, clothing divine truths, with a divine power to this purpose.

6. When corruption rises pray it down, as Saint Paul did, and to strengthen thy prayer, claime the promise of the new covenant, that God would *circumcise our hearts*, and *wash us with cleane water*, that he would *write his law in our hearts*, and give us his *holy Spirit* when we beg it. And look upon Christ as a publique *fountain* open for *Judah* and *Jerusalem* to wash in.

Herein

6.

Cap. 12.

1.

2.

Herein consists our *comfort*, 1. that Christ hath all *fulnesse* for us, and that our nature is perfect in him; 2. That Christ in our nature hath satisfied divine justice, not onely for the sin of our *lives*, but for the sin of our nature. And 3. that he will never give over untill by his Spirit he hath made *our nature* holy and pure as his own, till he hath taken away not only the reign, but the very life and being of sin out of our hearts. 4. That to this end he leaves his Spirit and truth in the Church to the end of the world, that the seed of the Spirit may subdue the *seed of the serpent* in us, and that the Spirit may be a never-failing spring of all holy thoughts, desires, and endeavours in us, and drie up the contrary issue and spring of corrupt nature.

And Christians must remember when they are much annoyed with their corruptions, that it is not their particular case alone, but the condition of all *Gods people*, lest they be discouraged by looking on the ugly deformed visage of old *Adam*: which affrighteth some so farre, that it makes them thinke, *No mans nature is so vile as theirs*; which were well if it tended to humiliation only; but Satan often abuseth

seth it towards discouragement and de-
 speration. Many out of a misconceit think
 that corruption is greatest when they feel
 it most, whereas indeed, the lesse we see it
 and lament it, the more it is. Sighs and
 groanes of the soule are like the pores of
 the body, out of which in diseased persons
sick humours break forth and so become
 lesse. The more we see & grieve for *pride*,
 which is an immediate issue of our cor-
 rupted nature, the lesse it is, because we see
 it by a contrary grace; the more *sight* the
 more *hatred*, the more *hatred* of sin the
 more love of grace, and the more *love* the
 more life, which the more lively it is, the
 more it is sensible of the contrary: upon
 every discovery & conflict corruption los-
 ses some ground, and grace gains upon it.

C A P. XIII.

Of Imagination, sinne of it, and remedies
 for it.

§. I.

ANd amongst all the *faculties* of the
 soule Most of the *disquiet* and unne-
 cessary *trouble* of our lives arises from the
vanity and ill government of that power
 of the soul which we call *imagination* and

M

opinion,

Sinfulness
 and vanity
 seated in
 the *imagi-
 nation* is a
 cause of
 much dis-
 quiet.

Cap. 13.

opinion, bordering between the senses and our understanding; which is nothing else but a shallow apprehension of *good* or *evil* taken from the *senses*: Now because *outward* good or *evil* things agree or disagree to the senses, and the life of *sense* is in us before the use of *reason*, and the delights of sense are *present*, and pleasing, and *sutable* to our natures: thereupon the *imagination* setteth a great price upon sensible good things; and the *judgment* it self since *the fall*, untill it hath an higher light and strength, yeeldeth to our *imagination*; hence it comes to passe that the *best things*, if they be attended with sensible inconveniences, as *want*, *disgrace* in the world, and such like, are misjudged for *evil* things; and the very worst things, if they be attended with respect in the world, and *sensible* contentments, are *imagined* to be the greatest good: which appears not so much in mens *words* (because they are ashamed to discover their *hidden* folly and atheism) but the *lives* of people speak as much, in that particular choice which they make. Many there are who think it not only a *vaine* but a *dangerous* thing to *serve* God, and a *base* thing to be

awed

awed with religious respects, they count the waies that Gods people take, no better than *madnesse*; and that course which God takes in bringing men to heaven by a plain publishing of *heavenly truths*, to be nothing but *foolishnesse*, and those people that regard it, are esteemed (as the *Pharisees* esteemed them that heard Christ) ignorant, base & despicable persons; Hence arise all those false *prejudices* against the waies of holiness, as they in the *Acts* were *shie* in entertaining the *truth*, because it was a way every where spoken against. The doctrine of the Crosse, hath the *crosse* alwaies following it, which *imagination* counteth the most odious and bitter thing in the world.

Acts 28.
22.

This *imagination* of ours is become the seat of vanity, and thereupon of vexation to us, because it apprehends a greater happinesse in outward *good* things than there is, and a greater *miserie* in outward *evil* things than indeed there is; and when experience shewes us that there is not *that good* in those things which we imagine to be, but contrarily, we finde much *evil* in them which we never expected, hereupon the soule cannot but be troubled: The

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life of many men, and those not the meanest, is almost nothing else but a *fancie*; that which chiefly sets their wits awork, and takes up most of their time, is how to please their owne *imagination*, which setteth up an *excellency* within it selfe, in comparison of which it despiseth all *true excellency*, and those things that are of most necessary consequence indeed. Hence springs *ambition*, and the *veine* of being great in the world; hence comes an unmeasurable desire of *abounding* in those things which the world esteems highly of, there is in us *naturally* a competition and desire of being *equall* or *above* others, in that which is generally thought to make us happy and esteemed amongst men; if we be not the *onely* men, yet we will be *some body* in the world, something we will have to be highly *esteemed* for, wherein if we be *crossed*, we count it the greatest misery that can befall us.

And which is worse, a corrupt desire of being great in the *opinion* of others, creeps into the *profession* of religion, if we live in those places wherein it brings credit or gain; men will sacrifice their very lives for vain glory: It is an evidence a man
lives

lives more to *opinion* and *reputation* of others, than to *Conscience*, when his grief is more for being disappointed of that *approbation* which he expects from men, than for his miscarriage towards God. It narres all in *religion*, when we goe about heavenly things with earthly affections, and seek not Christ in Christ, but the world: What is Popery but an artificiall frame of *mans braine* to please mens *imaginations* by outward state and pomp of *Ceremonies*, like that *golden Image* of *Nebuchadnezzar*, wherein he pleased himself so, that to have uniformity in worshipping the same, he compelled all under pain of *death* to *fall downe* before it; this makes *superstitious* persons alwaies cruell, because *superstitious* devises are the brats of our owne imagination, which we strive for more than for the purity of Gods worship; hence it is likewise that *superstitious* persons are restless (as the woman of *Samarita*) in their own spirits, as having no bottome, but *fancie* in stead of *faith*.

Dan. 3. 6.

§. 2.

Now the reason why *imagination* works so upon the soule, is, because it stirs up the *affections* answerable to the good or ill

How full *imagination* worke upon the soule.

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which

Cap. 13.

which it apprehends, and our affection stir the humours of the body, so that oftentimes both our souls and bodies are troubled hereby.

Things work upon the soul in this order: 1. Some object is presented. 2. Then it is apprehended by *imagination* as good and pleasing, or as evil and hurtfull. 3. If good, the desire is carried to it with delight: if evil, it is rejected with distast, and so our *affections* are stirred up suitably to our apprehension of the object. 4. Affections stirre up the *spirits*. 5. The spirits raise the *humours*, and so the whole man becomes moved and oftentimes distempered; this falleth out by reason of the *sympathy* between the *soule* and *body*, whereby what offendeth one redoundeth to the hurt of the other.

And we see *conceiv'd* troubles have the same effect upon us, as *true*. *Jacob* was as much troubled with the *imagination* of his *sons death*, as if he had been dead indeed; *imagination* though it be an empty windy thing, yet it hath *reall* effects. *Superstitious* persons are as much troubled for neglecting any *voluntary* service of *mans* invention, as if they had offended
against

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against the direct commandement of God : thus *superstition* breeds false feares, and false feare brings true vexation ; it transforms God to an *Idoll*, imagining him to be pleased with whatsoever pleases our selves, when as we take it ill that those who are under *us* should take direction from themselves, and not from us, in that which may content us. *Superstition* is very busie, but all in vaine, *in vaine they worship me*, saith God ; and how can it choose but vex and disquiet men, when they shall take a great deale of paines *in vaine*, and which is worse, to displease most in that wherein they think to please most. God blasteth all devised service with one demand, *Who required these things at your hands ?* It were better for us to aske our selves this question before-hand, *Who required this ? Why doe we trouble our selves about that which we shall have no thanks for ?* We should not bring God down to our own *imaginations*, but raise our *imaginations* up to God.

Mat. 15.9.

Esay 1.12.

Now *imagination* hurteth us, 1. By false representations. 2. By preventing *reason*, and so usurping a censure of things, before our *judgments* trie them, whereas

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the office of *imagination* is to minister matter to our *understanding* to work upon, and not to lead it, much lesse mislead it in any thing. 3. By forging matter out of it self without *ground*; the *imaginary* grievances of our lives are more than the *reall*. 4. As it is an ill instrument of the understanding to devise *vanity & mischief*.

§. 3.

The first
remedy for
hurtfull i-
maginati-
ons.

2 Cor. 10.
5.

The way to cure this malady in us, is, 1. To labour to bring these *risings* of our souls into the obedience of Gods truth and Spirit; for *imagination* of it self, if *ungoverned*, is a *wild* and a *ranging* thing; it wrongs not onely the frame of Gods work in us, setting the *baser* part of a man above the *higher*, but it wrongs likewise the worke of God in the creatures and every thing else, for it shapes things as it *self* pleaseth, it maketh *evill* good, if it pleaseth the senses; and *good* evill, if it be dangerous and distastfull to the outward man; which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsetled soule. As if it were a god, it *can tell* good and evill at its pleasure, it sets up and pulls down the price of what it listeth: By reason of the *distemper* of imagination, the life of many

The Soules Conflict.

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is little else but a *dream*; Many good men are in a long dream of misery, and many bad men in as long a dream of happiness, till the time of *awaking* come, and all because they are too much led by *appearances*; and as in a *dream* men are deluded with false joyes, and false feares: So here, which cannot but breed an unquiet and an unsettled soule: therefore it is necessary that God by his *word* and *Spirit* should erect a government in our hearts to *captivate* and order this licentious faculty.

2. Likewise it is good to present *reall* things to the soule, as the *true* riches, and *true* misery of a Christian, the *true* honour and dishonour, *true* beauty and deformity, the *true* noblenesse and debasement of the soule; What ever is in the world, are but *shadowes* of things in comparison of those *true realities* which Religion affords; and why should we vex our selves about a *vaine shadow*?

The Holy Ghost to prevent further mischief by these outward things, gives a dangerous report of them, calling them *vanity*, *unrighteous Mammon*, *uncertaine riches*, *thorns*, yea *nothing*; because though they be not so in themselves, yet, our *imagination*

2.

Psal. 39. 6.

Luk. 14. 9.
Prov. 23. 5.

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gination over-valuing them, they prove so to us upon triall; Now knowledge that is bought by *triall* is often deare bought, and therefore God would have us prevent this by a right *conceit* of things before-hand, lest trusting to *vanity* we *vanish* our selves, and trusting to *nothing* we become *nothing* our selves, and which is worse, *worse* than *nothing*.

3.

3. Oppose serious *consideration* against vaine *imagination*, and because our imagination is prone to raise false *objects*, and thereby false *conceits*, and *discourses* in us; Our best way herein is to propound *true* objects for the minde to work upon; as,
 1. to consider the greatnesse and goodnesse of Almighty God, and his *love* to us in Christ. 2. The joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell. 3. The last and strict *day of account*. 4. The vanity of all earthly things. 5. The uncertainty of our lives, &c. From the meditation of these truths, the soule will be prepared to have *right* conceits of things, and to discourse upon true grounds of them, and thinke with it selfe, that if these things be so *indeed*, then I must frame my life futable to these principles; hence, arise *true affections*

in

in the soule, true *fear* of God, true *love* and desire after the best things, &c. The way to expell *winde* out of our bodies, is to take some wholesome nourishment, and the way to expell *windy fancies* from the soule, is to feed upon serious truths.

4. Moreover, to the well ordering of this unruly *faculty*, it is necessary that our nature it self should be *changed*, for as men are, so they *imagine*, as the *treasure of the heart is*, such is that which comes from it; An *evill* heart cannot *thinke* well: before the heart be *changed* our judgment is *depraved* in regard of our *last end*, we seek our *happinesse* where it is not to be found; *Wickednesse* comes from the *wicked*, as the Proverb is. If we had as large and as quick *apprehensions* as Satan himself, yet if the relish of our will and affections be not *changed*, they will set the *imagination* a worke, to devise satisfaction to themselves. For there is a mutuall working and reflux betwixt the *will* and the *imagination*; the *imagination* stirs up the will, and as the *will* is affected, so *imagination* worketh.

When the *Law* of God by the *Spirit* is so *written in our hearts*, that the *law* and
our

4.

Matth. 12.

35.
Mala
mens, ma-
lus animus.

1 Sam. 24.

13.

Cap. 13.

8 Cor. 13.

5.

Matth. 22.

27.

2 King. 2.

20.

Esay 59. 5.

our *hearts* become agreeable one to the other, then the soule is enclined and made pliable to every good thought: When the heart is once *taught of God* to love, it is the nature of this sweet *affection* (as the Apostle saith) to *thinke no evill* either of *God* or *man*, and not only so, but it carries the bent of the whole soule with it to good, so that we *love God* not onely with *all our heart*, but with *all our minde*, that is, both with our *understanding* and *imagination*. Love is an affection full of *inventions*, and sets the wit awork to *devise* good things; therefore our chief care should be, that our *hearts* may be *circumcised* and *purified* so, as they may be filled with the *love of God*, and then we shall finde this duty not only *ease* but *delightfull* unto us. The Prophet *healed the waters* by *casting salt* into the *spring*, so the seasoning of the *spring* of our actions seasons *all*. And indeed what can be expected from man whilst he is *vanity* but *vaine imaginations*? What can we look for from a *Viper* but *poyson*? A man naturally is either *weaving spiders webs*, or *hatching Cockatrices eggs*, that is, his heart is exercised either in *vanity* or *mischief*,
for

for not onely the frame of the *heart*, but what the heart *frameth* is evill continually. A wicked man that is besotted with false *conceits*, will admit of no good thoughts to enter.

5. Even when we are *good* and devise good things, yet there is still some sicknesse of *fancie* remaining in the best of us, whereby we work trouble to our selves, and therefore it is necessary we should labour to *restraine* and *limit* our fancie, and *stop these waters* at the *beginning*, giving no not the least way thereunto. If it begins to grow *wanton*, tame the wildnesse of it by fastning it to the *Crosse* of Christ, *whom we have pierced with our sins*, and amongst other, with these *sins* of our *spirits*, who hath *redeemed* us from our *vaine* thoughts and *conversations*; set before it the *consideration* of the wrath of God, of death, and judgment, and the wofull estate of the damned, &c. and take it not off till thy heart be taken off from straying from God; When it begins once to run out to impertinencies, *confine* it to some certaine thing, and then upon examination we shall finde it bring home some *honey* with it; otherwise it will bring
us

Cap. 13.

Gen. 6. 5.

Zach. 13.
10.

1 Pet. 1. 18.

Cap. 13.

Luk. 19. 47.

us nothing but a *sting* from the bitter remembrance of our former mis-spent thoughts and time, which we should *redeem* and fill up, with things that most *belong to our peace*. *Idlenesse* is the *houre of temptation*, wherein Satan joynes with our *imagination*, and sets it about his own worke, to grinde his griece, for the soule as a Mill either grinds that which is put into it, or else worke upon it self. *Imagination* is the *first wheel* of the soule, and if that move amisse, it stirs all the *inferiour wheels* amisse with it; It stirs it *self*, and other powers of the soule are stirred by its motion; and therefore the well-ordering of *this* is of the greater consequence; For as the *imagination* conceiveth, so usually the *judgment* concludeth, the *will* chuseth, the *affections* are carried, and the *members* execute.

If it breake loose (as it will soone run riot) yet give no consent of the *will* to it; though it hath defiled the *memory*, yet let it not defile the *will*; though it be the *first borne* of the soule, yet let it not as *Reuben* ascend unto the *fatthers bed*, that is, our *will*, and defile that which should be kept pure for the *Spirit* of Christ; resolve

Bernard.

to

to act nothing upon it, but crosse it before it moves to the execution and practice of any thing: As in *sicknesse*, many times we imagine (by reason of the corruption of our *tast*) *Physick* to be ill for us, and those meates which *nourish the disease* to be good, yet care of health makes us crosse our owne *conceits*, and take that which fancie abhors: So if we would preserve *sound spirits*, we must conclude against *groundlesse* imagination, and resolve that whatsoever it suggests cannot be so, because it crosses the grounds both of *religion* and *reason*: And when we finde *imagination* to deceive us in *sensible* things (as Melancholy persons are subjects to mistake) we may well gather, that it will much more deceive us in our *spirituall condition*, And indeed such is the incoherence, impertinencie, and unreasonable-ness of *imagination*, that men are oft *ashamed & angry* with themselves afterwards for giving the least way to such thoughts, and it is good to *chastise* the soule for the same, that it may be more *wary* for time to come; whilst men are led with *imagination*, they worke not according to right rules prescribed to men, but as other baser creatures

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creatures, in whom *phantasie* is the chief ruling power, and therefore *those* whose *will* is guided by their *fancies* live more like beasts than men.

We allow a horse to prauce and skip in a *pasture*, which if he doth when he is once backt by the rider, we count him an unruly and an unbroken jade: so howsoever in other creatures we allow *liberty* of *fancy*, yet we allow it not in man to friske and rove at its pleasure, because in him it is to be bridled with *reason*.

6.

6. Especially take heed of those cursed *imaginations* out of which as of mother *roots* others spring forth; as questioning *Gods providence*, and care of his children, his *justice*, his dis-regarding of what is done here below, &c. *thoughts* of putting off our amendment for time to come, and so *bleſsing our selves* in an evill way; *thoughts* against the necessity of *exact* and *circumspect walking* with God, &c. When these and such like *principles* of *Satans* and the *fleshes divinity* take place in our hearts, they block up the soule against the entrance of *soul-saving* truths, and taint our whole conversation, which is either good or evill, as the *principles* are by which we are

Eph. 5.15.

are guided, and as our *imagination* is, which lets in all to the soule.

The *Jews* in *Jeremics* time were forestalled with *vaine imaginations* against sound *repentance*, and therefore his counsell is, *Wash thine heart o. Ierusalem, how long shall vain thoughts lodge within thee?*

7. Fancie will the better be kept within its due bounds, if we consider the principall use thereof; *Sense & imagination* is properly to judge what is comfortable or uncomfortable, what is pleasing or displeasing to the outward man, (not what is morally or spiritually good or ill,) and thus farre by the lawes of nature and civility we are bound to give *fancie* contentment both in our selves and others, as not to *speak* or *doe* any thing uncomely, which may occasion a *loathing* or *disfast* in our converse with men: and it is a matter of *conscience* to make our lives as comfortable as may be, as we are bound to *love*, so we are bound to use all helps that may make us *lovely*, and induce us into the good affections of others: As we are bound to give no offence to the *conscience* of another, so to no *power* or *faculty* either of the outward or inward

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man

Cap. 13.

41, 42

Phil. 3.

8.

man of another. Some are taken off in their affection by a fancy; whereof they can give but little reason; and some are more careless in giving offence in this kind, than stands with that Christian circumspection and mutuall respect which we owe one to another. The Apostles rule is of large extent; *Whatsoever things are not onely true, and honest, and just, but whatsoever things are lowely, and of good report, &c. thinke of these things.* Yet our main care should be to manifest our selves rather to mens consciences than to their imaginations.

8. It should be our wisdom likewise to place our selves in the best convenience of all outward helps which may have a kinde working upon our fancies; and to take heed of the contrary, as time, place, and objects, &c. There be good houses, and good messengers of Gods sending, golden opportunities, wherein God uses to give a meeting to his children, & breathes good thoughts into them. Even the wisest and holiest men, as David and Solomon, &c. had no further safety than they were carefull of well using all good advantages, and sequestering themselves from such

such objects as had a working power upon
them; by suffering their soules to be led
by their fancies, and their heeles to run
after their eyes, they betrayed and robbed
themselves of much grace and comfort,
thereupon Solomon cries out with griefe
and shame from his own experiences, *Vanities,
vanities, all is vanity*, *Ecc. 1. 2.* *Fancy will take fire
before we be aware.* Little things are
seeds of great matters; *Job* knew this;
and therefore made a covenant with his
eyes; *But if soules eyes are in the corner of
the earth, saith Solomon, who shall see it?*
Sometimes the ministering of some ex-
cellent thought from what we heare on set,
proves a great advantage of spiritall
good to the soule. Whilste *Saint Ambrose* in
our of curiosity delighted to heare the
elegance of *Saint Ambrose*, he was taken
with the matter it selfe, sweetly sliding
together with the words into his heart.
Of later times, whilste *Catharine* *Carthusia*
lucan *Italian* *Marquiss*, and *Nephus* *re*
Pope Paul so was hearing *Paul* *Martyr* and
dying upon a *Crucifix*, and the wing the de-
bevalence of mans judgment in spiri-
tall things, and the efficacy of labours
in those that belong unto God, and
further

Eccles. 1. 2.

Job 31. 1.

*Prov. 17.
24.*

*Præclara
cogitatio.*

*Began his
life.*

S. 13.

Hoc. 1. 1.

Job 3. 1.

Psa. 1. 1.

Psa. 2. 1.

Psa. 3. 1.

Psa. 4. 1.

Psa. 5. 1.

Psa. 6. 1.

further using a *similitude* to his purpose;
 If a man be walking as afeare off, and see
 people dancing together, and heare no
 musicke of the *musick*, he judges them fools;
 and so of *their* *will*; but when he comes
 nearer, and heares the *musick*, and sees
 that every motion is exactly done by
 art. Now he changes his minde, and is
 so taken up with the sweet agreement of
 the *gesture*, and the *musick*, that he is
 not onely delighted therewith, but de-
 sires to joyne himself in the number;
 so it falls out (saith he) with men, Whill
 they looke upon the outward carriage
 and conversation of Gods people, and
 see it differing from others, they think
 them fools; but when they looke more
 narrowly into their courses, and see
 gracious *harmony* betwixt their *lips*
 and the *Word* of God, then they begin
 to be in love with the *beauty* of *holiness*,
 and joyn in conformity of holy obed-
 ence with those they scorned before.
 This *similitude* wrought so with this
 Noble-man, that he began from that time
 forward to set his minde to the study of
 heavenly things.

One seasonable truth falling upon a

further

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pre

prepared hearts hath oftentimes a sweet
and strong operation. Luther confesseth
that having heard a grave Divine Bishop
say, that *that is the end of repentance*, which
begin of *friend to love of God*, ever after what
time the practice of repentance was sweet
to him. This speech of his likewise
took with him, that in doubts of
repentance we should begin from the
wounds of Christ; that is, from the sense
of Gods love to us in Christ, we should
arise to the grace given us in election be-
fore the world was. *21* The porting of lively colours upon
such truths hath oft a strong working
both upon the fancy, and our will and
affection. The spirit is refreshed with fresh
things, or old truths refreshed; this made
the Preacher seek to finde out pleasing and
acceptable words; and our Saviour Christs
manner of teaching was, by a lively repre-
sentation of mens faults, to teach them
heavenly truths in an earthly sensible
manner; and indeed what doe we see or
hear but will yeeld matter to a holy heart
to raise it self higher. *22* We should make our fancy servicable
to us in spirituall things, and take advan-

Doctrina
predestina-
tionis inci-
pit à vul-
neribus
Christi.
2 Tim. 1.9

Eccles. 12.
10.

22. voce
24

Cap. 3.

Luk. 10. 30.

Eccles. 12.

Prov. 15.
15.

rage by any pleasure, nor prefer to know
 which is presents our thoughts withall;
 to thinketh with our felicity. What is
 this to the true honour, and to those in-
 diting pleasures, &c. And seeing God
 hath condescended to represent heavenly
 things to us under earthly termes, we
 should follow Gods dealing herin: God
 represents heaven to us, under the terme
 of a banquet, and of a kingdome, &c. our
 union with Christ under the terme of a
 marriage, yea Christ himselfe under the
 name of whatsoever is lovely or comfort-
 able in heauen or earth. So the Lord sets
 out Hell to us by whatsoever is terrible or
 horrenting. Here is a large field for our
 imagination to walke in, not onely with
 shewes, but with a great deale of spiritu-
 all images. If the wrath of a King be as the
 wrath of a Lion, what is the wrath of
 the King of Kings? If fire be so terrible,
 what is hell fire? If a dark chunge be so
 loathsome, what is that eternall darkness
 of darknesse? If a feast be so pleasing,
 what is the continuall feast of a good con-
 science? If the meeting of friends be so
 comfortable, what will our meeting to-
 gether in heaven be? The scriptures by

such

such like termes would help our faith and fancy both at once; a sanctified fancy will make every creature a ladder to heaven. And because childhood and youth are ages of fancy, therefore it is a good way to infill into the hearts of children beimes, the loving of good, and the shunning of evill: by such like representations as agree with their fancies, as to hate hell under the representation of fire and darkness, &c. Whilst the soule is joyned with the body, it hath not onely a necessary but a holy use of imagination, and of sensible things whereupon our imagination worketh; What is the use of the senses, but to help our soules by our senses, and our senses by imagination? as the soule receives much hurt from imagination, so it may have much good thereby.

But yet it ought not to ~~know~~ ^{know} or devise what is good and true in religion, here fancy must yeeld to faith; and faith to divine revelation; the things we believe are such, as neither eye hath seen, nor have heard, neither came into the heart of man by imagination stirred up from any thing which we have seen or heard; they are above not onely imagination, but reason it selfe,

1 Cor. 2. 9.

Cap. 13.

self, in men and Angels. But as for God hath revealed spirituall truths, and faith hath apprehended them, then imagination hath use while the soule is joyned with the body, to colour divine truths, and make lightsome what faith believes, for instance, it doth not devise either heaven or hell, but when God hath revealed them to us, our fancy hath a fitnesse of enlarging our conceits of them, even by resemblance from things in nature, and that without dangour, because the joyes of heaven, and the torments of hell are so great, that all the representations which nature affords us, fall short of them. And Imagination hath likewise some use in religion, by putting cases to the soule, as when we are tempted to any unruly action, we should thinke with our selves, What would I doe if some holy grave person, whom I much reverence should behold me? Whereupon the soule may easily ascend higher; God sees me, and my owne conscience is ready to witness against me, &c. This helps us also in taking benefit by the example of other men; Good things are best learned, by others expressing of them.

Cap. 13?

Est aliquid
quod ex
magna viro
vel tacens
proficiat.

Basio

9. 24.
-cristm
luc. anoi
aniquod
aniquod

01. 20. 2

them to our view; the very sight often
(nay the very thought) of a good man doth
good, as representing to our soules some
good thing which we affect; which makes
Histories and the lively *Characters* and ex-
pressions of *virtues* and *vices* usefull to
us. The sight, yea the very reading of
the suffering of the *Martyrs* hath wrought
such a hatred of that *persecuting* Church;
as hath done marvellous good; the sight
of justice executed upon malefactors;
works a greater hatred of sin in men than
naked precepts can doe; So outward
pomp and *state* in the world, doth further
that awfull respect due to *authority*; Seco-
ndly, it would much availe for the
well ordering of our *thoughts*; to set our
soules in order every *morning*; and to
strengthen and perfume our spirits with
some gracious *meditations*; especially of
the chief end and scope wherefore we live
here; and how every thing we doe, or be-
falls us, may be reduced and ordered to
further the maine. The end of a *Chri-*
stian is glorious, and the best thoughts of
it will raise and enlarge the soule; and set
it on worke to study how to make all
things serviceable therunto. It is a thing
to

Capes

humble
in heart
our eyes
suffering
and long

to be lamented that a Christian born for heav'n, having the price of his high calling set before him, and matters of that weight and excellency to exercise his heart upon, should be taken up with trifles, and fill both his head and heart with vanity and nothing, as all earthly things will prove ere long; and yet if many mens thoughts and discourses were distilled, they are so frothy that they would hardly yeeld one drop of true comfort.

Object.

Answ.

Imaginations and thoughts not free.

2 Cor. 10.

5.

Obi but (say some) thoughts and imaginations are free, and we shall not be accountable for them. This is a false plea, for God hath a sovereignty over the whole soule; and his law binds the whole inward and outward man; as we desire our whole man should be saved by Christ, so we must yeeld up the whole man to be governed by him; and it is the effect of the dispensation of the Gospel, accompanied with the Spirit, to captivate whatsoever is in man unto Christ, and to bring down all high towering imaginations that exalt themselves against Gods Spirit. There is a divinity in the word of God powerfully unfolded, which will

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will convince our soules of the insubornesse
of our ~~owne~~ *owne* ~~imaginations~~, as we see in the
Idol, Corinthe 14. who seeing himselfe ~~told~~
open before himselfe, cryed out, that ~~God~~
was ~~his~~ *his* ~~speaker~~.

1 Cor. 14.
25.

26.

1.

2.

3.

2
- 270 21000
- 2700

There ought to be in man a comfort
mity to the truth and goodness of things,
or else we shall ~~wrong~~ *wrong* our owne soules
with false apprehensions. And 2. the crea-
ture, by putting a fashion upon it other-
wise then God hath made. And 3. we
shall wrong God himselfe the ~~Author~~ *Author* of
goodnesse, who cannot have his true glory
but from a right apprehension of things
as they are. What a wrong is it to men
when we shall take up false prejudices
against them without ground, and so suffer
our ~~conscience~~ *conscience* to be inveniomed against
them by unjust ~~suppositions~~ *suppositions*, and by this
means deprive our selves of all that good
which we might receive by them. For our
duty is up to judge and accept of things
as they are, and not of persons as
we please to ~~know~~ *know* themselves. This
feeling up and pulling downe which we
will, ~~judged~~ *judged* ~~mis~~ *mis* friends ~~will~~
vaine, because they were upon a false
W

4. Iniqui
25

Job 27. 12

imagina-

Cap. 13.

Joh. 6. 46.

Similitudo
mater erro-
rum.

Ephes. 4.

22.

1 Tim. 6. 9

Imagination and discourse, judging him to be an *an Hypocrite*, which could not but adde much to his affliction: when men take a toy in their head against a person or place, they are ready to reason as he did, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?*

It is an indignity for men to be led with *surmises* and *probabilities*, and so to passe a rash judgment upon persons and things: Oftentimes *fullness* hath a fairer glosse of probability than *truth*, and *wisdom* go masqued under the appearance of *virtue*, whereupon *seeming likeness* breeds a mistake of one thing for another, and Satan oftentimes casts a mist before our *imagination*, that so we might have a mishapen conceit of things: by a spirit of *elusion* he makes *worldly* things appeare bigger to us, and *spirituall* things lesser than indeed they are, and so by sophisticating of things our affections come to be misled. *Imagination* is the *warber*, and Satan the *father* of all monstrous *conceptions* and disordered *lusts*, which are well called *deceitfull lusts*, and *lusts of ignorance*, foolish and noysome lusts, because they both spring from error and folly, and lead unto it.

We

We see even in Religion it self, how the world (together with the help of ~~the~~ god of the world) is led away, if not to worship images; yet to worship the image of their own fancie; And where the truth is most professed; yet people are prone to fancie to themselves such a breadth of Religion; as will altogether leave them comfortlesse, when things shall appear in their true colours; they will conceit to embrace truth without hatred of the world, and Christ without his crosse, and a godly life without persecution; they would pull a rose without prick; Which though it may stand with their owne base ends for a while, yet will not hold out in times of change; when sickness of body & trouble of minde shall come; Empty conceits are too weak to encounter with real griefs.

Some think Orthodox and right opinions to be a plea for a loose life; whereas there is no lill course of life but springs from some false opinion. God will not onely call us to an account how we have believed, disputed, and reasoned, &c. but how we have lived. Our care therefore should be to build our profession not on seeming appearances, but upon sound grounds.

Cap. 13.

grounds, that the gates of hell cannot pre-
 vaile against. The hearts of many are so
 vaine, that they delight to be blown up
 with flattery, because they would have
 their imaginations pleased (yea even when
 they cannot but know themselves abused)
 and are grieved to have their windy blad-
 der pricked, and so to be put out of their
 conceived happiness. Others out of a wi-
 diousness in serious and sedled thoughts
 entertaine every thing as it is offered to
 them at the first blush, and suffer their
 imaginations to carry them presently
 thereunto without further judging of it:
 she will naturally loves variety & change,
 and our imagination doth it service here-
 in, as not delighting to fix long upon any
 thing; hereupon men are contented both
 in religion, and in common life to be misled
 with prejudices upon shallow grounds:
 Whence it is that the best things and per-
 sons suffer much in the world, the power
 and practice of Religion is hated under
 odious names, and so condemned before
 it is understood; Whence we see a ne-
 cessity of getting Spirituall Eyes, for
 without true knowledge the heart cannot
 be good.

Prov. 19. 2.

It.

Cap. 13.

known to our selves. A good Christian begins his repentance where his sin begins, *in his thoughts*, which are the next issue of his heart. God counts it an honour when we regard his *all-seeing eye* so much, as that we will not take liberty to our selves in that which is offensive to him, no not in our *hearts*, wherein no creature can hinder us. It is an argument that the *Spirit* hath set up a *kingdome* and *order* in our hearts, when our spirits rise within us against any thing that lifts it self up against goodnesse.

Object.

Many flatter themselves, from an *impossibility* of ruling their *imaginations*, and are ready to lay all upon *infirmity* and *naturall weaknesse*, &c.

Answer.

Not impossible to rule the imagination, and how.

But such must know that if we be sound Christians, the *spirit* of God will enable us to doe all things (Evangelically) that we are *called unto*, if we give way without check to the motions thereof, where the Spirit is, it is such a *light*, as discovers not only *dunghills*, but *motes* themselves, even *light* and *flying imaginations*, and abaseth the soules for them, and by degrees purgeth them out, and if they presse (as they are

are as busie as flies in Summer) yet a good heart will not owne them, nor allow himself in them, but casts them off, as hot water doth the scum, or as the stomach doth that which is noysome unto it, they finde not that entertainment *here* which they have in carnall hearts, where the scum soakes in; which are *stewes* of uncleane thoughts, *shambles* of cruell and bloody thoughts, *Exchanges* and *shops* of waine thoughts, a very *forge* and *mint* of false, *politick*, and *undermining* thoughts, yea often a little *hell* of confused and black imaginations. There is nothing that more moveth a godly man to renew his interest every day in the perfect righteousness and obedience of his *Saviour*, than these sinfull *stirrings* of his soule, when he finds something in himself alwaies *inticing* and *drawing* away his heart from God, and intermingling it self with his best performances. Even good thoughts are troublesome if they come *unseasonably*, and weaken our exact performance of duty.

§. 6.

But here some misconceits must bee taken heed of.

1. As we must take heed that we ac-

O

count

Miscon-
ceits about
imaginati-
on, to be
avoided.

1.

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1 Thel. 5.
22.A&S. 26.
24.Matth. 11.
19.

count not our *imaginations* to be religion; So we must not account *true religion*, and the *power of godlinesse* to be a matter of *imagination onely*; as if *holy men* troubled themselves more than needs, when they stand upon *religion* and *conscience*, seeking to *approve themselves to God in all things*, and endeavoring (so far as frailty will permit) to *avoid all appearances of evil*. Many men are so serious in *vantities*, and reall in *trifles*, that they count *all*, which dote not upon such *outward excellencies* as they doe (because the *Spirit of God* hath revealed to them things of a *higher nature*) to be *fantasticks & humourous* people, and so impute the worke of the *Spirit* to the *flesh*, *Gods work* to *Satan*, which comes neer unto blasphemy: they *imagine* good men to be led with *vain conceits*, but good men *know* them to be so led. Not onely *St Paul*, but *Christ* himself, were counted *besides themselves*, when they were earnest for God and the souls of his people. But there is enough in *Religion* to beare up the soule against all *imputations* laid upon it: the true *children of wisdom* are alwaies able to justify their *Mother*, and the *conscionable practice of holy duties*, is founded

ded upon such solid grounds as shall hold out when heaven and earth shall vanish.

2.

2. We must know that as there is great danger in false conceits of the way to heaven, when we make it *broader* than 'tis, for by this means we are like men going over a bridge, who think it broader than it is, but being deceived by some *shadow*, sinke down, and are suddenly drowned; So men mistaking the strait way to life, and trusting to the *shadow* of their own *imagination*, fall into the bottomlesse pit of hell before they are aware. In like manner the danger is great in making the way to heaven *narrower* than indeed it is, by weak and superstitious *imaginations*, making more sinnes than God hath made. The *Wisemans* counsell is that we should not make our selves *over wicked*, nor be *foolisher than we are*, by devising more sins in our *imagination*, than we are guilty of.

Eccles. 7.
27.

It is good in this respect, to know our *Christian liberty*, which being one of the fruits of Christs death, we cannot neglect the same, without much wrong not onely to our selves, but to the rich bounty and goodnesse of God. So that the due rules of limitation be observed, from *authority*,

O 2

piety,

Cap. 13.

1 Cor. 3.
16, 17.

3.

piety, sobriety, needlesse offence of others, &c. wee may with better leave use all those *comforts* which God hath given to refresh us in the way to *heaven*, than refuse them; the care of the outward man bindes conscience so farre, as that we should neglect nothing which may help us in a cheerfull serving of God, in our places, and tend to the due honour of our bodies which are the *temples of the Holy Ghost*, and companions with our souls in all performances. So that under this pretence we take not too much liberty to satisfie the lusts of the *body*. Intemperate use of the creatures is the nurse of all passions: because our spirits which are the soules instruments, are hereby inflamed and disturbed; it is no wonder to see an intemperate man transported into any *passion*.

3. Some out of their *high* and *ayery* imaginations, (and out of their *iron* and *flinty* Philosophy) will needs thinke *outward* good and ill, together with the *affections* of grief and delight stirred up thereby, to be but opinions and *conceits* of good and evil onely, not *true* and *really* so founded in *nature*, but taken up of our selves: But though our *fancy* be ready to conceit

a greater hurt in *outward* evils than indeed there is, (as in *poverty*, *paine of body*, *death of friends*, &c.) yet we must not deny them to be *evils*: that *wormwood* is bitter, it is not a conceit only, but the *nature* of the thing it self, yet to abstain from it altogether for the *bitternesse* thereof is a hurtfull conceit. That *honey* is sweet, it is not a conceit onely, but the *naturall quality* of it is so; yet out of a taste of the *sweetnesse*, to thinke we cannot take too much of it, is a *misconceit* paid home with loathsome bitternesse. Outward good & outward evill and the affections of *delights* and *sorrow* rising thence, are *naturally* so, and depend not upon our opinion. This were to offer violence to *nature*, and to take *man* out of *man*, as if he were not *flesh* but *steel*; Universall experience from the sensiblenesse of our *nature* in any *outward grievance*, is sufficient to damne this conceit.

The way to *comfort* a man in *grief*, is not to tell him that it is onely a conceit of evil, and no *evil* indeed that he *suffers*; this kinde of learning will not down with him, as being contrary to his present *feeling*; but the way is, to yeeld unto him that

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that there is cause of *grieving*, though not of *overgrieving*, and to shew him grounds of *comfort* stronger than the *grief* he suffers. We should weigh the *degrees* of *evill* in a right ballance, and not suffer *fancie* to make them greater than they are; So as that for *obtaining* the greatest outward *good*, or *avoiding* the greatest outward *ill* of *suffering*, we should give way to the least *evil* of *sin*. This is but a *policy* of the *flesh* to take away the *sensiblenesse* of *evil*, that so those *checks* of *conscience* and *repentance* for *Sin*, which is oft occasioned thereby, might be taken away; that so men may go on enjoying a *stupid* happinesse, never laying any thing to *heart*, nor *afflicting* their souls, untill their consciences awaken in the place of the damned, and then they feel that grief returne upon them for ever, which they laboured to put away when it might have been seasonable to them.

§. 7.

This a very
pertinēt
doctrine,
and why.

I have stood the longer upon this, because *Satan* and his *instruments* by bewitching the *imagination* with false *appearances*, misleadeth not onely the *world*, but troubleth the peace of men taken out
of

of the world, whose estate is laid up safe in Christ, who (notwithstanding) passe their few daies here in an uncomfortable, wearisome, and unnecessary *sadnesse of spirit*, being kept in ignorance of their happy condition by Satans *jugling* and their own mistakes, and so come to heaven before they are aware. Some againe passe their daies in a golden *dreame*, and drop into *hell* before they think of it; but it is farre better to dream of *ill*, and when we awake to finde it but a *dream*, than to dream of some great *good*, and when we awake to finde the contrary.

*Esa pham.
tasia.*

As the distemper of the *fancie* disturbing the act of reason, oftentimes breeds madnesse in regard of civill conversation; So it breeds likewise *spirituall* madnesse, carrying men to those things, which if they were in their right wits they would utterly abhorre; therefore we cannot have too much care upon what we fix our thoughts; And what a glorious discovery is there of the excellencies of *Religion* that would even ravish an *Angel*, which may raise up, exercise, and fill our hearts? We see our *fancie* hath so great a force in naturall conceptions, that it oft sets a

Cap. 13.

marke and impression upon that which is *conceived* in the *wombe*. So likewise strong and *holy* conceits of things (having a divine virtue accompanying of them) transforme the soule, and breed spirituall impressions answerable to our spirituall apprehensions. It would prevent many *crosses*, if we would conceive of things as they are; When *trouble* of minde, or *sicknesse* of body, and *death* it self cometh, what will remaine of all that *greatnesse* which filled our *fancies* before? *then* we can *judge* soberly, and *speak* gravely of things. The best way of *happinesse*, is not to *multiply* honours or riches, &c. but to *cure* our conceits of things, and then we cannot be very much cast downe with any thing befalls us here.

Therefore when any thing is presented to our soules, which we see is ready to work upon us; we should ask of our selves upon what ground we entertaine such a conceit, whether we shall have the same judgment after we have yeelded to it as now we have? and whether we will have the same judgment of it in *sicknesse* and *death*, and at the day of *reckoning* as we have for the present? That which is of it self

self evill, is *alwaies* so at one time as well as another; If the time will come, when we shall thinke those things to be vaine, which *now* we are so eagerly set upon, as if there were some great good in them; Why should we not thinke so of them *now*, when as the reforming of our judgment may doe us good: rather than to be led on with a *pleasing* errorr untill that time, wherein the sight of our errorr will fill our hearts with horror and shame, without hope of ever changing our condition?

Here therefore is a speciall use of these Soliloquies, to awake the *soule*, and to stir up *reason* cast asleep by Satans *charmes*, that so scattering the *clouds* through which things seem otherwise then they are, we may discern and judge of things according to their true and constant nature; Demand of thy soule, Shall I alwaies be of this minde? Will not the time come when this will prove bitterness in the end? Shall I redeem a *short* contentment with *lasting* sorrow? Is my Judge of my mind? Will not a time come when all things shall appeare as they are? Is this according to the rule, &c?

To

Cap. 13.
Divers
principles
of mans
actions.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

To conclude therefore, whereas there be divers *principles* of mens actions, as
 1. *Natural inclination*, inclining us to some courses more than others : 2. *Custom*, which is *another nature* in us : 3. *Imagination*, apprehending things upon shallow grounds ; from whence springs *affectation*, whereby we desire glory in things above our own strength and measure, and make shew of *that*, the truth whereof is wanting in us : 4. *True judgment*, discerning the true reasons of things : 5. *Faith*, which is a spirituall *principle* planted in the soule, apprehending things above reason, and raising us up to conceive of all things as God hath discovered them. Now a sound Christian should not be *lightly* led with those first *common grounds* of naturall *inclination, custom, opinion, &c.* but by *judgment* inlightned, advanced, & guided by *faith*. And we must take heed we suffer not things to passe suddenly from *imagination* to *affectation*, without asking advice of our *judgment*, and *faith* in the way, whose office is, to weigh things in Gods *ballance*, and thereupon to accept, or refuse them.

CAP. XIV.

Of help by others. Of true comforters, and their graces. Method. Ill successe.

§. I.

BUt because we are subject to *favour* and *flatter* our selves, it is wisdom to take the benefit of a second selfe, (that is) a wel-chosen friend, *living*, or *dead*, (Books I meane) which will speak truly without flattery of our estates. *A friend is made for the time of Adversity*, and two are better than *one*; for by this means our troubles are *divided*, and so more easily born. The very presence of a true-hearted friend yeilds often ease to our grief: of all *friends*, those that by office are to speak a word to a weary soule, are most to be regarded, as speaking to us in Christs stead. Oftentimes (especially in our own case) we are blinded and benighted with *passion*; and then the judgment of a friend is clearer. *Living* friends have a three fold privilege: 1. Their advice is *sutable*, and fit to our present occasion, they can meet with our *grievance*, so cannot books so well: 2. What comes from a *living* friend, comes *lively*, as helped by his spirit:

There is a help for us against troubles in others.

Prov. 17.
17.

1.

2.

Cap. 14.

3.

spirit. 3. In regard of our selves, what they say is apprehended with more ease, and lesse plodding and bent of minde; There is scarce any thing wherein we see God more in favour towards us, than in our *friends*, and their seasonable speeches; our hearts being naturally very *false* and willingly *deceived*. God often gives us up to be misled by men, *not* according to *his*, but *our own* naughty hearts. As men are, such are their *Counsellors*, for such they *will* have, and such God lets them have. Men whose *wills* are stronger than their *wiss*, who are wedded to their *own* waies, are more pleased to hear that which complies with their *inclinations*, than a harsh truth which crosses them; this presages ruine, because they are not *counsellable*: wherefore God suffers them to be led through a *fools paradise* to a true *prison*, as men that will neither heare themselves nor others who would doe them good against their wills; It was a signe God would destroy *Elies sonnes* when they would heare no *counsell*; God *fills* such men with their *owne waies*. Men in great place often in the abundance of all things else, want the benefit of a *true friend*, because

1 Sam. 2.

25.

Pro. 14. 14.

*Idco amicus
deest quia
nihil deest.*

cause under pretence of *service* of them men carry their *own ends*; as they flatter *themselves*, so they are flattered by *others*, and so robbed of the true judgment of themselves. Of all spirituall judgments this is the heaviest, for men to be given up to such a measure of *selfwilnesse*, and to refuse spirituall *balme* to heale them, usually such *perish without remedy*, because to be *wilfully* miserable is to be *doubly* miserable, for it adds to our misery, that we brought it *willingly* upon our selves.

It is a course that will have a blessing attending it, for *friends* to joyne in *league* one to watch over another, and observe each others waies. It is an usuall course for Christians to joyne together in other holy duties, as *hearing*, *receiuing* of the *Sacrament*, *prayer*, &c. but this fruit of holy *communion* which ariseth from a *mutuall* observing one another is much wanting; whence it is that many *droop*, so many are so *uncheerfull* in the waies of God, and lie groaning under the *burden* of many *cares*, and are battered with so many temptations, &c. because they are left onely to their *owne* spirits. What an unworthy thing is it, that we should pity a
beast

Cap. 14.

Prov. 29. 1.

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beast over loaden, and yet take no pity of a brother? whereas there is no living member of Christ but hath *spirituall* love infused into him, and some ability to comfort others. Dead stones in an Arch uphold one another, and shall not living? It is the worke of an *Angel* to comfort, nay, it is the office of the *Holy Ghost* to be a *Comforter*, not onely immediately, but by breathing comfort into our hearts together with the comfortable words of others; thus one friend becomes an *Angel*, nay a *God* to another; and there is a sweet sight of God in the face of a friend; for though the comfort given by Gods *Messengers* be ordinarily most effectuall, as the blessing of Parents (who are in Gods roome) is more effectuall than the blessing of others upon their children: yet God hath promised a blessing to the offices of *Communion of Saints* performed by one private man towards another. Can wee have a greater encouragement than under God to be gainer of a soule, which is as much in Gods esteem as if we should gaine a world? *Spirituall* almes are the best almes; *mercy* shewed to the soules of men is the greatest *mercy*; and wisdom in winning

winning of *soules* is the greatest wisdom in the world, because the *soule* is especially the man, upon the goodnesse of which, the happinesse of the *whole man* depends: What shining and flourishing Christians should we have if these duties were performed? As we have a portion in the *Communion of Saints*, so we should labour to have *humility* to take good, and *wisdom* and *love* to doe good. A Christian should have *feeding* lips, and a *healing* tongue; the *leaves*, the very words, of the *tree of righteousness* have a curing virtue in them.

Some will shew a great deale of *humanity* in comforting others, but little *Christianity*; for as *kinde men* they will utter some *cheerfull words*, but as *Christians* they want wisdom from above to speak a gracious word in season: Nay some there are, who hinder the saving working of any affliction upon the hearts of others, by unreasonable and *unseasonable* discourages, either by suggesting false remedies, or else diverting men to false contentments, and so become spirituall *traitors* rather than friends, taking part with their worst enemies, their *lusts* and *will*s. Happy is he that
in

Cap. 14.

in his way to heaven meeteth with a cheerfull and skilfull *guide* and *fellow-traveller*, that carrieth *cordials* with him against all faintings of spirit: It is a part of our *wisdom* to *salvation* to make choice of such a one as may further us in our way: An *indifferency* for any *company* shews a dead heart; where the life of grace is, it is sensible of all advantages and disadvantages: How many have been refreshed by *one* short, apt, savoury speech? which hath begotten, as it were, new spirits in them.

Job 2. 12.

Job 6. 14.

1.

2.

In ancient times (as we see in the Story of *Job*) it was the custome of friends to meet together, to comfort those that were in misery, and *Job* takes it for granted, that *to him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friends*: for besides the presence of a friend which hath some influence of comfort in it; 1. The discovery of his *loving affection* hath a cherishing sweetnesse in it. 2. The expression of love in *reall* comforts and services by supplying any outward want of the party troubled, prevails much; thus Christ made way for his comforts to *the soules* of men, by shewing outward kindnesse to their *bodies*: Love with the sensible *fruits* of it, prepareth

prepareth for any wholsome counsell. 3.
After this, *wholsome words* carry a speciall
cordiall virtue with them, especially when
the Spirit of God in the affectionate spea-
ker joynes with the *word of comfort*, and
thereby closeth with the heart of a trou-
bled patient: when all these concenter and
meet together in one, then is comfort *sea-*
led up to the soule. The childe in *Eliza-*
beths wombe sprang at the presence and
salutation of *Mary*, the speech of one hear-
ty friend cannot but revive the spirits of
another; Sympathy hath a strange force,
as we see in the strings of an Instrument,
which being played upon (as they say) the
strings of another instrument are also mo-
ved with it. After love hath once *kindled*
love, then the heart being melted, is fit to
receive any impressiō; unlesse *both* pieces
of the iron be red *hot* they will not joyne
together; *two* spirits warmed with the
same heat will easily solder together.

§. 2.

In him that shall stay the minde of ano-
ther there had need to be an excellent
temper of many graces, as, 1. *Knowledge*
of the grievance, together with *wisdom* to
speake a word in season, and to conceale
P that

Luk. 1. 41.

Graces ne-
cessary in
dealing
with an-
other.

1.

Cap. 14.

2.

3.

1 Cor. 13.

6.

A.C. 13. 18.

Ερωπο-
γειν.

Non est idē
ferre, si quid
ferendū est,
& probare,
si quid pro-
bandum
non est.

that which may set the cure backwards. 2. *Faithfulness* with liberty, not to conceal any thing which may be for his good, though against present liking. The very life and soule of *friendship* stands in *freedom*, tempered with wisdom and faithfulness. 3. *Love* with compassion and patience to *beare all*, and *hope all*, and *not to be easily provoked* by the waywardnesse of him we deale with. Short-spirited men are not the best comforters: God himself is said to *bear with the manners of his people in the wilderness*: It is one thing to *bear* with a wise sweet *moderation* that which may be *borne*, and another thing to *allow* or approve that which is not to be *approved* at all. Where these graces are in the *speaker*, and apprehended so to be by the person *distempered*, his heart will soone embrace whatsoever shall be spoken to rectifie his judgment or affection. A good conceit of the *spirit* of the speaker is of as much force to prevail as his *words*. Words especially prevaile, when they are uttered more from the *bowels* than the *braine*, and from our owne *experience*, which made even Christ himself a more compassionate *high Priest*. When men come to them-
selves

selves againe, they will be the deepest censurers of their own miscarriage.

Cap. 14.

§. 3.

Further directions.

Moreover, to the right comforting of an afflicted person, speciall care must be had of discerning the true *ground* of his grievance, the *coare* must be searched out; if the grief ariseth from outward causes, then it must be carried into the right channell, the course of it must be turned another way, as in staying of *blood*; we should grieve for sin in the *first place*, as being the *evil* of all evils: If the ground be *sin*, then it must be drawn to a head; from a *confused* grief to some more *particular* sin, that so we may strike the right veine; but if we finde the spirit much cast down for particular sins, then comfort is presently to be applied; But if the grief be not fully ripe, *then*, as we use to *help* nature in its offers to purge, by *Physick*, till the sick matter be carried away; so when *conscience*, moved by the *spirit*, begins to ease it self by *confession*, it is good to help forward the work of it, till we finde the heart low enough for comfort to be laid upon. When *Paul* found the *Taylor* cast down almost as low as hell, he stands not

1.

2.

3.

Cap. 14.

A.G. 16.31

now upon further hammering, and preparing of him for mercy, (that worke was done already) but presently stirs him up to *believe in the Lord Iesus Christ*; here being a fit place for an interpreter to declare unto man *his* righteousness, and *his* mercy that belongs unto *him* after he hath acknowledged *his* personall and *particular* sins, which the naturall guile of the heart is extreemly backward to doe, and yet cannot receive any sound peace till it be done: If signes of grace be discerned, here likewise is a fit place to declare unto man the saving work of grace in his heart, which Satan labours to hide from him. Men oft are not able to read their owne evidences without help.

In case of stiffness and standing out, it is fit the *Man of God* should take some *authority* upon him, and lay a *charge* upon the souls of men in the name of Christ, to give way to the truth of Christ, and to forbear putting off that mercy which is so kindly offered, when we judge it to be their portion; which course will be succesfull in hearts *awed* with a reverend fear of *grieving Gods Spirit*. Sometimes men must be dealt roundly withall, as *David* here

here deales with his owne soule, that so whilst we ask a reason of their dejection, they may plainly see they have no reason to be so cast down; for oftentimes *grievances* are irrationall, rising from *mistakes*; and *counsell*, bringing into the soul a *fresh light*, dissolves those grosse *fogs*, and setteth the soul at *liberty*. What grief is contracted by *false* reason, is by *true* reason altered. Thus it pleaseth God to humble men by letting them see in what need they stand one of another, that so the communion of Saints may be indeared; every relation wherein we stand towards others, are so many bonds and sinewes whereby one *member* is fitted to derive comfort to another, *through love the bond of perfection*: All must be done in this sweet *affection*. A member out of joynt must be tenderly set in againe, and bound up, which onely men guided by the spirit of love seasoned with discretion are fit to doe, they are *taught of God* to doe what they should. The more of Christ is in any man, the more willingnesse and fittnesse to this duty, to which this should encourage us, that in strengthening *others* we strengthen *our selves*, and derive upon our selves

Col. 3. 14.

Cap. 14.
Psal. 41. 1.

1 Thel. 5.
14.

Ezek. 34.
4.

*Si illas
molestias
lingua di-
cat, à con-
scientia do-
lor emanat,
vulnera e-
nim clausa
plus cruci-
ant. Greg.*

the blessing pronounced on those that consider the needy, which will be our comfort here, and crown hereafter, that God hath honoured us, to be instruments of spirituall good to others. It is an injunction to comfort the feeble minded, and there is an heavy imputation on those that comforted not the weake: when men will not owne men in trouble, but as the herd of Deere forsake and push away the wounded Deere from them: And those that are any waies cast down, must stoop to those waies which God hath sanctified to convey comfort; for though sometimes the Spirit of God immediatly comforts the soule, which is the sweetest, yet for the most part the Sun of righteousness that hath healing in his wings, conveyeth the beams of his comfort by the help of others, in whom he will have much of our comfort to be hid, and for this very end it pleaseth God to exercise his children (and Ministers especially) with trialls and afflictions, that so they having felt what a troubled spirit is in themselves, might be able to comfort others in their distresses with the same comfort wherewith they have beene comforted: God often suspends comfort

comfort from us to drive us to make use of *our Christian friends*, by whom he pur-
poseth to doe us good. Oftentimes the
very opening of mens grievances bringeth
ease without any further working upon
them; the very opening of a *veine* cools
the blood. If God in the state of *innocency*
thought it fit *man* should have a *helper*,
if God thought it fit to send an *Angel* to
comfort Christ in his *agonies*, shall any
man think the comfort of *another* more
than needs? Satan makes every *affliction*,
by reason of our corruption, a *temptation*
to us, whereupon we are to encounter not
onely with our owne *corruptions*, but with
spirituall wickednesses, and need we not
then that others should joyne forces with
us to discover the temptation, and to con-
firme and comfort us against it? for so
reason joyning with *reason*, and *affection*
with *affection*, wee come by uniting of
strength, to be impregnable. Satan hath
most advantage in *solitariness*, and there
upon sets upon Christ in the *wildernesse*,
and upon *Eve* single, and it added to the
glory of Christs victory, that he *over-*
came him in a single combat, and in a place
of such disadvantage. Those that will be

Mt. 4.

Gen. 3.

Cap. 4.

Ecclef. 4. 9.

1.

2.

3.

alone (at such times) doe as much as in them lieth to tempt the *tempter* himself to tempt them. The Preacher gives 3 Reasons why *Two are better than One*:

1. Because if *one fall*, the other may *lift him up*: as that which is *stronger* shoreth up that which which is *weaker*, so *feeble minds* are raised & kept up by the *stronger*; Nay, oftentimes he that is weaker in one grace, is stronger in another; one may help by his *experience* and *meeknesse of love*, that needs the help of another for *knowledge*. 2, If *two lie together*, one may warme another by *kindling* one anothers *spirits*. Where *two* meet together upon such holy grounds & aymes, there Christ by his *spirit* makes up another, and this three-fold cable who shall break? While *Joss* lived, *Jehoiada* stood upright; While *Lasymer* and *Ridley* lived, they kept up *Cranmer* by intercourse of letters and otherwise, from entertaining counsels of *Revolt*. The Disciples presently upon *Christ's* apprehension *fainted*, notwithstanding he laboured by his heavenly doctrine to put courage and comfort into them. 3. If any give an *on-set* upon them, there is *two to withstand it*, *Spirit* joyning with

with *spirits*; and because there is an acquaintance of spirits as well as of persons, those are fittest to lay open our mindes unto, in whom upon experience of their fidelity our hearts may most safely relie. We lose much of our strength in the loss of a true friend; which made *David* be-moane the losse of his friend *Jonathan*, *Wo is me for thee my brother Jonathan!* He lost a piece of himselfe, by losing him whom his heart so clave unto; *S. Paul* accounted that God had shewed especiall mercy to him, in the recovery of *Epaphroditus*.

Cap. 14.

*Solatium
vita, habere
cui possis
aperias.*
Ambros.

2 Sam. 1.
20.

Phil. 2. 27.

§. 4.

But there are divers miscarriages in those that are *troubled*, which make the comfort of others of none effect.

Miscarriages in the party that needs to be comforted.

I.

1. When the *troubled party* deales not directly, but *doubleth* with him that is to help him. Some are ashamed to acknowledge the true ground of their grievance, pretending sorrow for one thing, when their hearts tell them it ariseth from another; Like the *Lapwings* which make greatest noise farthest from their nest, because they would not have it discovered: This deceit moved our blessed Saviour

viour

Cap. 14.

viour (who knew what was in the hearts of men) to fit his *answers* many times, rather to the *man* than to the *matter*.

2.

2. Some relie too much upon particular men, Oh if they had such a one they should doe well, and mislike others, (fitter perhaps to deale with them, as having more through knowledge of their estates) because they would have their disease rather *covered* than cured; or if *cured*, yet with *soft words*, whereas no playster worketh better than that which causes smart. Some out of meer humorous *fondnesse* must have that which can hardly be got, or else nothing pleases them: *David* must needs have the *waters of Bethlehem* when others were neerer hand: And oftentimes when men have not onely whom they desire, but such also who are fit and dexterous in dealing with a troubled spirit, yet their soules feel no comfort, because they make *idols* of men; Whereas men at the best are but *conduits* of comfort, and such as God freely conueyeth *comfort* by, taking liberty oft to deny comfort by them, that so he may be acknowledged the *God of all comfort*.

2 Sam. 23.

15.

3.

3. Some delude themselves, by thinking

king it sufficient to have a few good words spoken to them, as if that could cure them; not regarding to apprehend the same, and mingle it with *faith*, without which, *good words* lose their working, even as wholesome *Physick* in a dead stomach.

Besides miscarriages in *comforting*; times will often fall out in our lives, that we shall have none either to comfort us, or to be comforted by us, and then what will become of us unlesse we can comfort our selves? Men must not think alwaies to live upon *almes*, but lay up something in store for themselves, and provide oyle for *their owne* lamps, and be able to draw out something from the *treasury* of their *own hearts*. We must not goe to the Surgeon for every scratch. No wise traveller but will have some refreshing waters *about him*. Againe, we are often driven to retire home to our own hearts, by uncharitable *imputations* of other men; even *friends* sometimes become *miserable comforters*: it was *Jobs* case, his friends had honest intentions to comfort him, but erred in their manner of dealing, if he had found no more comfort by reflecting upon

Cap. 14.

upon his owne *sincerity*, than he received from them, who laboured to take it from him, he had been doubly miserable. We are most privie to our owne intentions and aimes, whence comfort must be fetched; Let others speak what they can to us, if our own hearts speak not with them, we shall receive no satisfaction. Sometimes it may fall out. that those which should *unloose* our spirits when they are *bound up*, mistake, the key misses the right wards, and so we lie bound still. Opening of our estate to another is not good, but when it is necessary, and it is not necessary, when we can fetch supply from our *owne* store; God would have us tender of our reputations, except in some speciall cases, wherein we are to *give glory* to God by a free and full confession. Needlese discovery of our selves to others, makes us feare the conscience of another man, as privie to that which we are ashamed he should be privie unto: and it is neither *wisdome* nor *mercy* to put men upon the rack of *confession*, further than they can have no ease any other way, for by this meanes we raise in them a jealousie towards us, and oft without cause; which
weakneth

weakneth and tainteth that love which should unite hearts in one.

Cap. 15,

C A P. XV.

*Of flying to God in disquiets of soule :
Eight observations out of the text.*

W^Hat if neither the speech of others to us, nor the rebuke of our owne hearts will quiet the soule ; Is there no other remedy left ?

Quest.

Yes, then look up to God, the Father and fountaine of comfort, as *David* doth here ; For the more speciall means whereby he sought to recover himself, was by laying a charge upon his soule to trust in God ; for having let his soule run out too much, he begins to recollect himself again, and resigne up all to God.

Ans.

§. I.

But, how came *David* to have the command of his owne soule, so, as to take it off from grief, and to place it upon God, could he dispose of his own heart himselfe ?

Quest.

The childe of God hath something in him above a man, he hath the spirit of
God

Ans.

Cap. 15.

God to guide his spirit: this command of David to his soule was under the command of the great Commander: God commands David to trust in him, and at the same time infuseth strength into his soule by thinking of Gods command, and trusting to Gods power, to command it self to trust in God: so that this command is not onely by authority, but by *virtue* likewise of Gods command: As the inferiour orbes move as they are moved by a higher; So Davids spirit here, moves as it is moved by Gods Spirit, which inwardly spake to him to speak to himself.

David in speaking thus to his owne soule, was, as every true Christian is, a Prophet, and an instructor to himself: It is but as if inferiour officers should charge in the name and power of the King. Gods children have a principle of life in them from the Spirit of God, by which they command themselves. To give charge belongs to a Superiour; David had a double Superiour above him, his owne spirit as sanctified, and Gods Spirit guiding that. Our spirits are the *Spirits* agents, and the Holy Spirit is Gods agent, maintaining his right in us. As God hath made

made man a free agent, *So* he guides him, and preserves that *free* manner of working which is agreeable to mans nature.

By this it appears, that *David's* moving of himself, did not hinder the Spirits moving of him, neither did the Spirits moving of him, hinder him from moving himself in a free manner; for the *Spirits* of God moveth according to our principles, it openeth our understandings to see that it is best to *trust in God*; It moveth so sweetly, as if it were an inbred principle, and *all one* with our *own* spirits; If we should hold our *will* to move it self, and not to be moved by the Spirit, we should make a God of it, whose property is to move other things, and not to be moved by any.

We are in some sort *Lords* over our own speeches & actions, but yet, under a *higher Lord*. *David* was willing to trust in God, but God wrought that *will* in him: he first makes our will *good*, and then works by it. It is a sacrilegious liberty that will acknowledge no dependence upon God. We are wise in *his* wisdom, and strong in *his* strength, who saith, *Without me ye can doe nothing*. But the bud of a good

*Ergone ita
liberi esse
volunt, ut
nec Deum
volunt ha-
bere Domi-
num? Aug.
de Spir. &
Lit.*

John 15.

Cap. 15.

*Certum est,
nos velle et
volumus,
sed ille fa-
cit ut veli-
mus. Aug.*

Duties.

1.

2.

good desire, and the *blossome* of a good resolution, and the *fruit* of a good action, all comes from God. Indeed the *understanding* is ours whereby we know what to doe, and the *will* is ours whereby we make choice of what is best to be done; but the *light* whereby we know, and the *guidance* whereby we choose, that is from a *higher agent*, which is ready to flow in to us with present fresh supply, when by vertue of former strength wee put our selves forward in obedience to God. Let but *David* say to his soule being charged of God to *trust*, I charge thee my soule to *trust in him*, and he findes a present strength inabling to it. Therefore we must both depend upon God as the first Mover, and withall set all the inferiour wheels of our souls a going according as the Spirit of God ministers motion unto us. So shall we be free from *self-confidence*, and likewise from neglecting that order of working which God hath established. *David* hearkened what the *Lord* said, before he said any thing to *himself*, so should we. Gods Commands tend to this, that we should command our selves. God, and the Minister under God, bid us *trust in him*.

him, but all is to no purpose till grace be wrought in the soule, whereby it bids it selfe; Our speaking to others doth no good, till they by entertaining what we say, speak the same to their owne souls.

Cap. 19.

In this charge of David upon his own soul, we may see divers passages and priviledges of a gracious heart in trouble.

§. 2.

As, 1. That a Christian when he is beaten out of all other comforts, yet hath a God to run unto. A wicked man beaten out of earthly comforts, is as a naked man in a storme, and an unarmed man in the field, or as a ship tossed in the Sea without an anchor, w^{ch} presently dashes upon rocks, or falleth upon quicksands; but a Christian when he is driven out of all comforts below, may, when God seems to be angry with him, he can appeal from God angry to God appeased, he can wrastle and strive with God by Gods owne strength, fight with him with his own weapons, and plead with God by his own arguments, What a happy estate is this? who would not be a Christian, if it were but for this, to have something to relie on when all things else faile? The confusion and unquietnesse

Obser. 1.

Q

which

Cap. 15.

which troubles raise in the soule, may drive it from resting in it self, but there can never be any true peace settled, untill it sees and resolves *what to stay upon.*

§. 3.

2.

2. We see here, that *there is a sanctified use of all troubles to Gods children*; first they drive them *out of themselves*, and then draw them *neerer to God*. Crosses indeed of themselves *estrangle* us more from God, but by an over-ruling worke of the Spirit they bring us *neerer to him*; The soule of it self is ready to *misgive*, as if God had too many *controversies* with it, to shew any favour towards it; and Satan helpeth; because he knowes nothing can stand and prevaile *against God*, or a soule that *relyeth on him*, therefore he labours to *breed and encrease* an everlasting division betwixt God and the soule; but let not Christians muse so much upon their trouble, but see whither it carries them, whether it brings them *neerer unto God*, or not; It is a never-failing rule of discerning a man to be in the state of grace, *when he finds every condition draw him neerer to God*; for thus it appeares that such love God, and are called of him, unto whom

whom *all things work together for the best.*

Cap. 14.
Rom. 8.28

§ 4.

3. Again, hence we see that the Spirit of God by these *inward speeches* doth *awake* the soule, and keep it in a holy *exercise*, by stirring up the grace of *faith* to its proper function. It is not so much the *having* of grace, as grace in *exercise*, that preserves the soule; therefore we should by this and the like means *stir up the grace of God* in us, that so it may be kept a working and in vigour and strength. It was *Dauids* manner to *awake* himself, by bidding both *heart* and *harp* to *awake*. It is the *waking Christian* (that hath his *wit* and his *grace* ready about him) who is the safe Christian, grace *dominant* without the *exercise* doth not secure us. It is almost all one (in regard of present exigence) for grace not to *be* and not to *work*. The soule without *action*, is like an instrument not played upon, or like a ship alwaies in the Haven: *Motion* is a preservative of the *purity* of things. Even life it self is made more *lively* by action. The Spirit of God whereby his children are led, is compared to things of the quickest and strongest

3.

Q2

actions;

Cap. 15.

actions; as *fire* and *winde*, &c. God himself is a pure *act*, alwaies in *acting*; and every thing the nearer it comes to God, the more it hath its *perfection* in working. The happinesse of man consists chiefly in a gracious frame of *spirit*, and *actions* suitable sweetly issuing there-from: the very *rest* of heavenly bodies is in *motion* in their proper places. By this stirring up the grace of God in us, *sparkles* come to be *flames*, and all graces are kept bright. Troubles stirre up *David*, and *David* being stirred stirres up himself.

§. 5.

4.

4. We see likewise here a *further use* of *Soliloquies* or *speeches* to *our own hearts*; when the soule by entring into it self sees it self put out of order, then it injoines this duty of *trusting in God* upon it: if we look onely on our selves and not turne to God, the worke of the soule is imperfect: *then* the soule worketh as it should, when as by reflecting on it self, it gathers some *profitable* conclusion, and leaveth it selfe with God. *David* upon reflecting on himselfe found nothing but *discouragement*, but when he looks upward to God, there he findes *rest*. This is one end why God suffers

Cap. 45.

suffers the soule to tire and bear it selfe, that finding *no rest* in it self, it might seek to him. *David* yeelds not so much to his *passion* as that it should keep him from God. Therefore let no man truly *religious* pretend (for an excuse) his *temper* or provoking *occasions*, &c. for *grace* doth raise the soule *above* nature; *Grace* doth not onely *stop* the soule in an *evill* way, but carries it to a contrary *good*, and raiseth it up to God. Though holy men be *subject* to like *passions* with others (as it is said of *Elias*) yet they are not so inthrall'd to them, as that they carry them wholly away from their God, but they heare a voice of the Spirit within them, calling them back again to their former *communion* with God; and so *grace* takes occasion, (even from *sin*) to exercise it self.

Jam. 5. 27.

§. 6.

5.

5. Observe further, that *distrust* is the *cause of all disquiet*: the soule suffers it self by something *here* below to be drawne away from God, but can finde no rest till it returne to him againe. As *Noah's Dove* had no place to set her *foot upon*, till it was received into the *Arke* from whence it came. And it is Gods mercy to us, that

Gen. 8. 11.

Q3

when

Cap. 19.

when we have let goe our hold of God, we should finde nothing but trouble and unquietnesse in any thing else, that so we might remember from whence *wee are fallen* and returne home againe. That is a good trouble which frees us from the greatest trouble, and brings with it the most comfortable rest; It is but an unquiet *quiet*, and a restless *rest* which is *out* of God. It is a deep spirituall judgment for a man to finde too much rest in the creature: The soule that hath had a saving worke upon it, will be alwaies impatient untill it recover its former sweetnesse in God: After Gods Spirit hath once *touched* the soule, it will never be quiet untill it stands pointed God-ward.

Object.

But conscience may object, *Upon any offence is God offended, and therefore not to be trusted?*

Answer.
Trust in
God, tho
an offen-
ded God.

It is true, where *faith* is not above *naturall conscience*, but a conscience *sprinkled with the blood of Christ*, is not scared from God by its infirmities and failings, but as *David* here, is rather stirred up to run unto God by his *distemper*; and it had been a greater sinne than his distemper *not* to have gone unto God. Those that have

have the spirit of sons in their hearts, run not further from God after they have a little strayed from him, but though it be the nature of sinfull passions to breed grief and shame, yet they will repaire to God againe, and their confidence overcomes their guilt; So well are they acquainted with Gods gracious disposition.

Yet we see here, David thinks not of trusting in God, till first he had done justice upon his owne soule, in rebuking the unruly motions thereof; Censure for sinne goeth before favour in pardoning sinne; or boldnesse to aske pardon of God; those that love God must hate ill: If our consciences condemne us of allowing any sinne, we cannot have boldnesse with God who is (light and can abide no darkenesse and) greater than our consciences.

Pl. 97. 10.

§ 7.

6.

6. Moreover, hence we see it is no easie thing to bring God and the heart together: David here as he often checks his heart, so he doth often charge his heart. Doubts and troubles are still gathering upon him, and his faith still gathering upon them. As one striving to get the haven, is driven back by the waves, but recovering

Q 4

him-

Cap. 15.

himselfe againe, gets forward still, and after often beating back, at length obtaines the wished heaven, and then is at rest. So much adoe there is to bring the soule unto God, the harbour of true comfort. It were an easie thing to be a Christian, if Religion stood onely in a few outward works and duties, but to take the soule to taske, and to deale roundly with our owne hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soule into spirituall subjection unto God; this is not so easie a matter, because the *soule* out of *self-love* is loath to enter *into it selfe*, lest it should have other thoughts of it selfe then it would have; *David* must bid his soule *trust*, and *trust*, and *trust* againe before it will yeeld. One maine ground of this difficulty, is that contrariety which is in the soule by reason of contrary principles: The soule so farre as it is gracious, *commands*, so farre as it is rebellious, *resists*, which drew holy *Austin* to a kinde of astonishment;

“ The soul commands the body and it yeelds,
 “ (saith he) it commands it selfe, and is
 “ resisted by it selfe, it commands the
 “ hand to move, and it moveth with such
 “ an

Vnde hoc
 monstrum,
 & quare
 istud? Aug.
 Conf.

“ an unperceivable quicknesse that you
 “ can discern no distance betwixt the
 “ command and the motion: Whence
 “ comes this? but because the soule per-
 “ fectly wills not, and perfectly injoynes
 “ not that which is good, and so farre
 “ forth as it fully wills not, so far it holds
 “ backe. There should be no need of
 commanding the soule if it were perfect,
 for then it would be of it selfe, what it
 now commandeth. If *David* had gotten
 his soule at perfect freedome at the first,
 he needed not have repeated his charge so
 often upon it. But the soule naturally
 sinks downward, and therefore had need
 often to be wound up.

§. 8.

7. Wee should therefore labour to
 bring our soules (as *David* doth here)
 to a firme and peremptory *resolution*, and
 not stand *wavering*, and as it were equally
 ballanced betwixt God and other things;
 but enforce our soules, we shall get little
 ground of *infidelity* else; drive your souls
 therefore to this issue, either to rely up-
 on God, or else to yeeld up it selfe to
 the present grievance; if by yeelding it
 resolves to be miserable, there's an end,
 but

*Non ex toto
 vult, non ex
 toto imperat,
 in tantum
 non fit quod
 imperat, in
 quantum
 non vult.*

7.

Chap. 15.

Esay 26.3.

but if it desires *rest*, then let it resolve upon this onely way, to *trust in God*, and well may the soule so *resolve*, because in God there are grounds of *quieting* the soule, above all that may unsettle it; In him there is both *worth* to satisfie, and *strength* to support the soule. The best way to maintain inward *peace*, is to settle and *fixe* our thoughts upon that which will make us *better*, till we find our hearts warmed and wrought upon thereby, and then (as the Prophet speaks) *God will keepe us in peace: peace*, that is, in *perfect and abundant peace*. This resolution stayed *Job*, that though God should kill him, yet he resolved to *trust in him*. Answerable to our resolution is our *peace*: the more *resolution* the more *peace*; *Irresolution* of it selfe without any grievance is full of *disquiet*; It is an unsafe thing alwayes to begin to live; to be alwayes cheapning and paltering with God: Come to this point once, *Trust God* I ought, therefore *trust God* I will, come what *may* or *will*.

And it is good to *renew* our resolutions again and again: for every *new resolution* brings the soule closer to God, and gets further in him, and brings fresh
strength

strength from him; which if we neglect, our *corruption* joining with outward *hinderances* will carry us further and further backward, and this will double, yea multiply our trouble and grief to recover ourselves again; we have both winde and tide against us: We are going up the hill, and therefore had need to arme our selves with *resolution*. Since the *fall*, the motion of the soule *upward* (as of heavy bodies) is violent, in regard of *corruption* which weighes it *downward*, and therefore all enforcement is little enough: Oppose therefore with *David* all *invincible* resolution, and then doubt not of prevailing; If we resolve in Gods power and not our owne, and be *strong* in the Lord, and *not* in our selves, then it matters not what our troubles or temptations be either from within, or without, for *trust* in God at length will triumph.

Ephes. 6. 10.

Here is a great mercy, that when *David* had (a little) let goe his hold of God, yet God would not let goe his hold of him, but by a spirit of faith drawes him back again to himself; God *turnes us* unto him, and then we returne. *Turne us again* (saith the Psalmist) *cause thy face to shine upon us,*
and

Psal. 80. 90

Cap. 15.

*Animo
ager semper
errat.*

and we shall be saved. When the soule leaves God once, it loses its way, and it selfe; and never returnes till God recalls it again. If morall principles cherished and strengthened by good education, will enable the soule against vicious *inclinations*, so that though some influence of the heavens worke upon the *aire*, and the aire upon the *spirits*, and the spirits upon the *humors*, and these incline the *temper*, and that inclines the *soule* of a man such and such waies, yet *breeding* in the refined-er sort of *civill* persons, will much prevaile to draw them another way; What then may we thinke of this powerfull grace of *faish* which is altogether *supernaturall*? Will not this carry the soule above all naturall inclinations whatsoever (though strengthened by outward occasions) if we resolve to put it to it: *David* was a King of *other men*, but here hee shewes that hee was a King of *himselfe*; What benefit is it for a man to be Ruler over all the world, and yet remaine a *slave* to himselfe?

§. 9.

8.

8. Again, *David* here doth not only resolve, but presently takes up *his soule* before

before it strayed too farre from God; the further and the longer the soule wanders from God, the more it intangles it selfe, and the thicker darknesse will cover the soule, yea the loather it is to come to God again, being ashamed to looke God in the face after discontinuing of acquaintance with him; Nay the stronger the league growes betwixt sinne and the soule, and the more there groweth a kind of sutablenesse betwixt the soule and sinne; Too long giving way to base thoughts and affections, discovers too much complacency and liking of sinne. If wee once give way, a little griefe will turne into bitter sorrow, and that into a settled pensivenesse and heavinesse of spirit, feare will grow into astonishment, and discouragement into despaire; If ever we meane to trust God, Why not now? How many are taken away in their offers and assaies, before they have prepared their hearts to cleave unto God? The sooner we give up our selves to the Lord, the sooner we know upon what termes wee stand, and the sooner we provide for our best security, and have not our grounds of comfort to seeke when we shall stand most in need
of

Cap. 25.

of them. *Time* will salve up griefe in the meanest of men, *Reason* in those that will suffer themselves to be ruled thereby, will cure (or at least stay the fits of it) sooner: but *Faith* if we stir it up, will give our soules no rest, untill it hath brought us to our true rest (that is) to God: therefore we should press the heart forward to God *passionally*, that Satan make not the rent greater.

Lastly, here we see, that *though the soule be overborne by passion for a time, yet if grace hath once truly seasoned it, it will worke it selfe into freedome againe, grace as oyle will be above.* The eye when any dust falls into it, is not more tender and unquiet, till it be wrought out againe, than a gracious soule is being once troubled: the *spirit* as a spring will be *cleansing* of it selfe more and more, whereas the heart of a carnall man, is like a standing poole, whatsoever is cast into it, *there* it rests; trouble and disquietnesse in him are in their proper place; It is proper for the Sea to rage and cast up dirt, God hath set it down for an eternall rule, that ** vexation* and *sinne* shall bee inseparable. Happiness and rest were severed from sinne

* *Iussit*
Domine et
sic est, ut
omnis in-
ordinatus
afflictus sibi
sit panna.
Aug.

in

in heaven when the Angels fell, and in Paradise when Adam fell, and will remain for ever separated, untill the breach be made up by faith in Christ.

C A P. X V I.

Of trust in God: grounds of it: especially his providence.

BUT to come neerer to the unfolding of this *trusting in God*, which David useth here as a remedy against all distempers. Howsoever confidence and trust be an affection of nature, yet by the *Spirits* sanctifying and carrying it to the right object, it becomes a *grace* of wonderfull use. In the things of *this life* usually he that hopes most is the most unwise man; hee being most deceived that hopes most, because hee trusts in that which is *uncertain*, and therefore deceitful hope is counted but the dreame of a waking man. But in *Religion* it is farre otherwise, here, hope is the main supporting grace of the soule, springing from faith in the *promises* of God.

Trust and hope are often taken in the same sense, though a distinction betwixt them

Cap. 16.

them hath sometimes its use: *faith* looks to the word *promising*, hope to the thing *promised* in the word; *faith* looks to the *authority* of the *promiser*, hope (especially) to the *goodnesse* of the *promise*; *faith* looks upon things as present, *hope* as to come hereafter. God as the *first truth* is that which *faith* relies on, but God as the *chief good*, is that which *hope* rests on: *Trust* or *confidence* is nothing else, but the strength of *hope*, if the thing hoped for be *deferred*, then of necessity it enforces *waiting*; and waiting is nothing else but *hope* and *trust* lengthened.

Howsoever there may be use of these and such like distinctions, yet usually they are taken promiscuously, especially in the old Testament. The nature and use of *faith* is set out by tearmes of *staying*, *resting*, *leaning*, *rolling our selves* upon God, &c. which come all to one, and therefore we forbear any further curious distinction.

Now seeing *trusting in God* is a remedy against all distempers, it is necessary that we should bring the *object* and the *act* (God and the Soule) together, for effecting of which, it is good to know something

God & the
Soule must
be brought
together
by trust.

thing concerning God, and something concerning trust. God is onely the fit object of trust, *hee* hath all the properties of that which should be trusted on; A man can bee in no condicion wherein God is at a losse and cannot helpe him; if comforts be wanting, *hee* can create comforts, not onely out of *nothing*, but out of discomforts; He made the *Whale* that swallowed up *Jonas*, a meanes to bring him to the *Shore*: The Sea was a wall to the Israelites on both sides: The devouring flames were a great refreshing to the three children in the fiery furnace; That trouble which we think wil swallow us up, may be a meanes to bring us to our haven; So mighty is God in power, and so excellent in working. God then, and God onely is a fit foundation for the soul to build it selfe upon, for the firmer the foundation is, the stronger will the building bee, therefore those that will build high must digge deepe: the higher the tree riseth, the deeper the root spreadeth and fastneth it selfe below. So it is in faith, if the foundation thereof bee not firme, the soul cannot build it self strongly upon it; Faith hath a double principle to
R. build

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Jona. i. 17.

Dan. 3.

Esa. 28. 29.

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build on, either a principle of *being*, or a principle of *knowing*; the principle of *being* is *God himselfe*, the principle of *knowing* is *Gods word*, whereby God commeth forth (*out of that hidden light which none can attaine unto*) and discovereth his meaning towards us for our good.

I.

This then must 1. bee supposed for a ground, *that there is a God*, and *that God is*, (that is) hath a full and eternall *being*, and giveth a *Being*, and an *order of Being*, to all things else; some things have *onely* a being, some things *life and being*, some things *sense*, &c. and some things have a more *excellent being*, including all the former, as the being of creatures indued with *reason*; If God had not a *being*, nothing else could bee; In things subordinate one to another, take away the *first*, and you take away *all* the rest: Therefore this proposition (*God is*) is the *first* truth of all, and if this were not, *nothing* else should be: as we see if the heavenly bodies doe not move, there is no motion here below.

2.

2. In the divine nature or *being*, there is a subsisting of *three Persons*, every one so *set out* unto us, as *fitted* for us to *trust* in:

in: the *Father* as a *Creator*, the *Sonne* as a *Redeemer*, the *Holy Ghost* as a *Comforter*, and all this in reference to us: God in the *first person* hath decreed the great work of our *salvation*, and all things tending to the accomplishment of it; God in the *second person* hath exactly and fully answered that decree and plot, in the work of our *redemption*; God in the *third person* discovers and applies all unto us, and fits us for communion with the *Father* and the *Sonne* from whom he proceeds.

3. GOD cannot bee comfortably thought upon out of *Christ* our *Mediator*, in whom he was *reconciling the world to himselfe*, as being a *friend* both to God and us, and therefore fits to bring God and the soule together, being a middle person in the *Trinity*; In *Christ* Gods nature becomes lovely to us, and ours to God: otherwise there is an utter enmity betwixt his pure and our impure nature: *Christ* hath made up the vaste gulfe betweene God and us; there is nothing more terrible to thinke on, than an absolute God out of *Christ*.

4. Therefore for the better drawing of us to trust in God, we must conceive of him

R 3

under

4.

1 Cor. 1. 19

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under the sweet relation of a *Father*; Gods nature is *Fatherly* now unto us, and therefore *lovely*.

5.

And for further strengthening our faith, it is needfull to consider what *excellencies* the Scripture giveth unto God, answerable to all our *necessities*; what *sweet Names* God is pleased to be known unto us by for our comfort, as a *mercifull, gracious, long suffering God*, &c.

Exo. 34. 6.

When *Moses* desired to see the glory of God, God thus manifested himselfe, in the way of goodnesse, *I will make all my goodnesse passe before thee.*

Exo. 33. 16

Whatsoever is good in the creature is first in God as in a fountaine; and it is in God in a more eminent manner and fuller measure. All *grace* and holinesse, all *sweetnesse of affection*, all *power* and *wisdom*, &c. as it is in him, so it is from him, and we come to conceive these properties to be in God, 1. by feeling the comfort and power of them in our selves; 2. by observing these things in their measure to be in the best of the creatures, whence we arise to take notice of what *grace* and what *love*, what *strength* and *wisdom* &c. is in God, by the beames

1.

2.

of

of these which we see in his creature, with adding in our thoughts *false* peculiar to God, and abstracting *imperfection*, incident to the creature; for that is in God in the highest degree, the sparkles whereof is but in us.

6. Therefore it is fit that unto all other *eminences* in God, we should strengthen our faith by considering those glorious *singularities*, which are altogether *incommunicable* to the creature, and which give strength to his other properties, as that God is not only *gracious* and *loving*, *powerfull*, *wise*, &c. but that he is infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably so. All which are comprised in and drawne from that one name *Jehovah*, as being of himselfe, and giving a being to all things else, of nothing; and able when it pleaseth him to turne all things to nothing againe.

7. As God is thus, so he makes it good by answerable *actions* and *dealing* towards us, by his continuall *providence*; the consideration whereof is a great stay to our faith, for by this providence God makes use of all his former excellencies for his peoples good; for the more comfortable apprehension of which, it is good

6.

7.
What God is, he maketh good by providence.

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to know that Gods *providence* is extended as farre as his *creation*. Every creature (in every element and place whatsoever) receiveth a powerful influence from God, who doth what pleaseth him, both in *heaven*, and *earth*, in the *sea*, and all places ; But we must know, God doth not put things into a frame, and then leave them to their owne motion, as wee doe *clocks*, after we have once set them right, and *ships* after wee have once built them, commit them to winde and waves ; but as he *made* all things, and *knowes* all things, so (by a continued kinde of creation) he preserves all things in their being and working, and governes them to their ends : He is the first mover that sets all the wheeles of the creature a working : One wheele may move another, but all are moved by the first. If God moves not, the *clock* of the creature stands. If God should not uphold things, they would presently fall (*to nothing*) from whence they came. If God should not guide things, *Satans* malice, and *mans* weakness, would soone bring all to a confusion. If God did not rule the great family of the world, all would breake and fall to pieces,

pieces, whereas the wise providence of God, keepeth every thing on its right hinges. All things stand in obedience to this providence of God, and nothing can withdraw it selfe from under it; If the creature withdraw it selfe from one order of providence, it falls into another; If man (the most unruly and disordered creature of all) withdraw himselfe from Gods gracious government of him to happiness, hee will soone fall under Gods just government of him to deserved misery; If hee shakes off Gods sweet yoke, he puts himselfe under Satans heavy yoke, who (as Gods executioner) hardens him to destruction; and so whiles he rushes against Gods will, he fulfils it. And whilst he wil not willingly do Gods will, Gods will is done upon him against his will.

The most casuall things fall under providence, yea (the most disordered thing in the world, (sinne) and (of sinnes the most horrible that ever the Sunne beheld) the crucifying of the Lord of life, was guided by a hand of providence to the greatest good. For that which is casuall in regard of a second cause, is not so in regard

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Deu. 19. 5.

Prov. 21. 1.

of the first, whose providence is most cleerely seene in casuall events that fall out by accident, for in these the effect cannot be ascribed to the next cause, God is said to kill him, who was unwarily slain by the falling of an axe or some instrument of death.

And though man hath a freedome in working, and (of all men) the hearts of Kings are most free, yet even these are guided by an over-riding power, as the rivers of water are carried in their channels, whither skilfull men list to derive them.

For setting of our faith the more, God taketh liberty in using weak meanes to great purposes, and setteth aside more likely and able meanes, yea sometimes he altogether disableth the greatest meanes, and worketh often by no meanes at all. It is not from want of power in God, but from abundance and multiplying of his goodnesse, that he useth any meanes at all: there is nothing that hee doth by meanes, but he is able to doe without meanes.

Nay, God often bringeth his will to passe by crossing the course and streame of meanes, to shew his own sovereignty, and to exercise our dependence, and maketh

keth his very enemies, the accomplislers of his owne wil, and so, to bring about that which they oppose most. Hence it is that wee beleeve *under hope against hope.*

But wee must know, Gods manner of *guiding* things is without prejudice of the proper working of the things themselves; he guideth them sweetly according to the *instincts* hee hath put into them; for,

1. He furnishes *creatures* with a vertue and power to worke, and likewise with a manner of working futable to their own nature, as it is proper for a man (when he workes) to worke with *freedom*, and other creatures by naturall instinct, &c.

1.

2. God maintaineth both the power and manner of working, and perfecteth and accomplisheth the same by acting of it, being neerer to us in all we doe, than we are to our selves. 3. He applies and stirs up our abilities and actions, to this or that particular, as hee seeth best.

2.

*Intimior in-
tismo nosto.*

3.

4. He suspends or removes the hinderances of all actions; and so, powerfully, wisely, and sweetly orders them to his owne ends. When any evill is intended God either puts bars and letts to the execution

4.

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Pl. 125. 3.

execution of it, or else limiteth and boundeth the same, both in regard of *time* and *measure*, so that our enemies either shall not doe the evill at all, or else not so long a *time*, or not in such a *height* of mischief, as their malice would carry them to: *The rod of the wicked may light upon the back of the righteous*, but it shall not rest there. God knows how to take our enemies off, sometimes by changing, or stopping their wills, by offering considerations of some good or ill, danger or profit to them; sometimes by taking away, and weakning all their strength, or else by opposing an equall or greater strength against it. All the strength our enemies have rests in God; who if he denies concurrence and influence, the *arme* of their power, (as *Feroboams* when he stretcht it out against the *Prophet*) shrinks up presently.

*Deus est
prima causa
cujuscumq;
non esse.*

God is not onely the cause of things and actions, but the cause likewise of the cessation of them, why they fall not out at all. G O D is the cause why things are *not*, as well as why they *are*; The cause why men favour us *not*, or (when they doe favour us) want present wisdom and ability to help us, is from Gods withdrawing

drawing the concurrence of his light and strength from them. If a skilfull Physician doth us no good, it is because it pleaseth God to hide the right way of curing at that time from him. Which should move us to see God in all that befalls us, who hath sufficient reason, as to *doe* what he doth, so *not* to doe what he doth not, to hinder, as well as to give way.

The God of spirits hath an influence into the spirits of men, into the principles and springs of all actions; Otherwise he could not so certainly foretell things to come. God had a worke in *Abshaloms* heart in that he refused the best counsell; there is nothing independent of him, who is the mover of all things, and himselfe unmoveable.

Nothing so *high*, that is above his providence; Nothing so *low*, that is beneath it; Nothing so large, but is bounded by it; Nothing so confused, but God can order it; Nothing so *bad*, but he can draw good out of it; Nothing so wisely plotted, but God can disappoint it, as *Achithophels* counsell; Nothing so simply and unpolitiquely carried, but he can give a prevailing issue unto it; Nothing so
freely

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freely carried, in regard of the next cause, but God can make it necessary in regard of the event; Nothing so naturall, but he can suspend it in regard of operation, as heavy bodies from sinking, fire from burning, &c.

It cannot but bring strong security to the soule, to know that in all variety of changes and intercourse of good and bad events, God and our God, hath such a disposing hand. Whatsoever befalls us, all serves to bring Gods *electing* love, and our *glorification* together, Gods *providence* serveth his *purpose* to save us. All *sufferings*, all *blessings*, all *ordinances*, all *graces*, all *common gifts*, nay our very *falls*, yea Satan himselfe with all his *instruments*, as over-mastered, and ruled by God, have this injunction upon them, to further Gods good intendment to us, and a prohibition to doe us no harme. *Augustus* taxed the world for civill ends, but Gods providence used this as a meanes for Christ to be borne at *Bethlehem*. *Ahasuerus* could not sleepe, and thereupon calls for the *Chronicles*, the reading of which occasioned the *Jews* delivery. God oft disposeth little occasions, to great

Esther 6.1.

great purposes. And by those very waies whereby proud men have gone about to withstand Gods counsells, they have fulfilled them, as we see in the story of Joseph and Moses, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly, He was above them.

CAP. XVII.

Of Graces to be exercised in respect of Divine Providence.

WE are under a providence that is above our owne; which should be a ground unto us, of exercising those graces that tend to settle the soule in all events. As,

1. Hence to lay our hand upon our mouthes, and command the soule an holy silence, not daring to yeeld to the least rising of our hearts against God. *I was dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it, saith David.* Thus Aaron when he had lost his two sonnes, both at once, and that by fire, and by fire from heaven, which carried an evidence of Gods great displeasure with it, yet held his peace. In this silence and hope is our strength.

Fleish

Cap. 17.
Divinum
consilium
dum devi-
tatur, im-
pletur; hu-
mana sapi-
entia dum
reluctatur,
comprehen-
ditur.
Greg.
Ex. 10. 11.

Psal. 39. 9.

Levit. 10.
1, 2.

Cap. 17.

Psal. 73. 1.

Flesh and blood is prone to expostulate with God, and to question his dealing, as we see in Gedeon, *Jeremie*, *Asaph*, *Habakkuk*, and others, *if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* but after some struggling betweene the *flesh* and the *spirit* the conclusion will be, *yes howsoever matters goe God is good to Israel.* Where a fearefull spirit, and a melancholy temper, a weake judgement, and a scrupulous and raw conscience meet in one, there *Satan* and *his*, together with mens owne hearts, which like *Sophisters* are continually cavilling against themselves, breed much disquiet, and makes the life uncomfortable. Such therefore should have a speciall care as to grow in knowledge, so to stick close to sure and certain grounds, and bring their consciences to the rule. Darkenesse causeth feares. The more light, the more confidence. When wee yeeld up our selves to God, we should resolve upon *quietnesse*, and if the heart stirres, presently use this check of *David*, *Why art thou disquieted?*

Gods waies seeme oft to us full of contradictions, because his course is to bring things to passe by contrary meanes. There

is

is a myſtery not onely in Gods decree concerning mans eternall eſtate, but likewiſe in his providence, as why hee ſhould deale unequally with men, otherwiſe equall. His judgements are a great depth, which we cannot fadome, but they will ſwallow up our thoughts and underſtandings. God oft wraps himſelf in a cloud, and will not be ſeen till afterward. Where we cannot trace him, we ought with S. Paul to admire and adore him. When we are in heaven, it will be one part of our happineſſe, to ſee the harmony of thoſe things, that ſeeme now confuſed unto us. All Gods dealings will appeare beautifull in their due ſeaſons, though we for the preſent ſee not the contiguity and linking together of one thing with another.

2. Hence likewiſe proceeds a holy reſigning of our ſelves to God, *who doth all things according to the counſell of his owne will.* His will is a wiſe will, it is guided by counſell, a ſoveraigne prevailing will. The onely way to have our will is to bring it to Gods will. *If we could delight in him, we ſhould have our hearts deſire.* Thus David yeelds up himſelfe unto God;
Here

2.

Voluntas
Dei neceſſi-
tas rei.

Cap. 17.
2 Sam. 15.
26.

1 Sam. 3. 18

Act. 21. 14.
vox verè
Christiano-
rum.

Rev. 6. 10.

Here I am, let the Lord deale with me as seemeth good unto him. And thus Eli, when God foretold by Samuel the ruine of his house, quiets himselfe, It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good. Thus our blessed Saviour stayes himselfe, Not my will, but thy will be done. And thus the people of God, when Paul was resolved to goe to Jerusalem, submitted, saying, The will of the Lord be done; a speech fit to proceed out of the heart and mouth of a Christian.

We may desire and long after a change of our condition, when we looke upon the grievance it selfe, but yet remember still that it be with reservation, when we looke upon the will of God, as, *How long Lord, holy and true, &c.* Out of inferiour reasons we may with our Saviour desire a removeall of the cup; but when we look to the supream *reason of reasons, the will of God*, here we must stoop and kisse the rod. *Thus humbling our selves under his mighty hand*, which by murmuring and fretting we may make more heavy, but not take off, still adding new guilt and pulling on new judgements.

3. The way patiently to suffer Gods will

will, is to inure our selves first to doe it. *Passive* obedience springs from *active*. He that indures any thing will endure it quietly, when he knowes it is the will of God, and considers that what ever befalls him, comes from his good pleasure. Those that have not inured themselves to the yoke of *obedience*, wil never indure the yoke of *suffering*, they fume and rage as a wild Bull in a net, as the Prophet speaks. It is worth the considering, to see two men of equal parts under the same crosse, how quietly and calmly the one that establisheth his soule on Christ, will beare his afflictions, whereas the other rageth as a foole, and is more beaten.

Nothing should displease us that pleaseth God; neither should any thing be pleasing to us, that displeaseth him. This conformity is the ground of comfort. Our owne will takes away God, as much as in it lyes. *If we acknowledg God in all our wayes, he will direct our paths, and lead us the way that we should goe.* The quarrel betwixt God and us is taken up, when *his* will, and our will are *one*; when we have sacrificed our selves, and our wills unto God; when, as he is highest in himselfe,

*Propria
voluntas
Deum
quantum
in ipsa
eximit.
Prov. 3. 6.
Esa. 48. 10.*



Cap. 17.

so his will hath the highest place in our hearts. We find by experience, that when our wills are so subdued, that we delight *to doe*, what God would have us doe, and *to be* what God would have us be, that then sweet peace presently riseth to the soule.

When we can say, Lord, if thou wilt have me poore and disgraced, I am content to be so: if thou wilt have mee serve thee in this condition I am in, I will gladly doe so. It is enough to mee that *thou* wouldest have it so. I desire to yeeld readily, humbly, and cheerefully, to thy disposing *providence*. Thus a Godly man saies *Amen* to Gods *Amen*, and puts his *fiat* and *placet* to Gods. As the *Sea* turnes all rivers into its owne relish; so he turnes al to his own spirit, & makes whatsoever befalls him, an exercise of some vertue. A *Heathen* could say, that calamities did rule over men, but a wise man hath a spirit over ruling all calamities; much more a *Christian*. For a man to be in this estate, is to injoy heaven *in the world* under heaven; Gods *Kingdom comes* where *his will is thus done* and suffered.

None feelee more sweet experience of Gods *providence*, then those that are
most

most resolute in their obedience. After we have given glory to God in relying upon his *wisdome, power, and truth*, wee shall find him imploying *these* for our direction, assistance, and bringing about of things to our desired issue, yea above what ever we looked for, or thought of.

In all cases that fall out, or that we can put to our selves; as in case of *extremity, opposition, strange accidents, desertion and damps of spirit, &c.* here wee may take *Sanctuary*, that we are in covenant with him, who sits at the sterne and rules all, and hath committed the government of all things to his *Sonne, our Brother, our Joseph, the second person in heaven*. Wee may be sure no hurt shall befall us, that he can hinder; and what cannot he hinder *that hath the keyes of hell and of death?* unto whom we are so neere, that he carries *our names in his breast, and on his shoulders*, as the *high Priest* did those of the *twelve Tribes*. Though his *Church* seems a *widow* neglected, yet hee will make the world know, that she hath a *Husband* will right her in his good time.

But it may be demanded, *What course is to be taken for guidance of our lives in particular*

S 2

titular

Cap. 17.

Answ.

1.

Summa-
rio que
pro religione
facit.

secular actions, wherein doubts may arise, what is most agreeable to the will of God?

1. We must not put all carelesly up on a *providence*, but first consider what is *our part*, and so farre as God prevents us with light, and affords us helps and means, we must not be failing in our duty. We should neither out-runne, nor be wanting to *providence*. But in perplexed cases, where the reasons on both sides seeme to be equally ballanced, see whether part make more for the maine end, the *glory of God*, the *service of others*, and advancement of *our owne spirituall good*. Some things are so cleare and even, that there is not a *best* between them, but *one* may be done as well as the *other*, as when two wayes equally tend to one and the same place.

2.

2. We are *not our owne*, and therefore must not set up our selves. We must not consult with *flesh and blood* either in our selves or others, for self-love wil deprave all our actions, by setting before us corrupt ends. It considers not what is best, but what is safest. By-respects sway the ballance the wrong way.

3.

3. When things are cleare, and Gods will

will is manifest, further *deliberation* is dangerous, and for the most part argues a false heart: as wee see in *Balaam*, who though he knew Gods minde, yet would be still consulting, till God in judgement gave him up to what his *covetous* heart led him unto. A man is not fit to deliberate, till his heart be purged of false aimes, for else God will give him to the darkness of his owne spirit, and he will be alwaies warping, unfit for any byas. Where the aymes are good, there God delighteth to reveale his good pleasure. Such a soule is levell and suitable to any good counsell, that shall be given, and prepared to entertaine it. In what measure any lust is favoured, in that measure the soule is darkned. Even wise *Salomon*, whilst he gave way to his *lust*, had like to have lost his wisdom.

We must looke to our place wherein God hath set us; if we be in subjection to others, *their* authority ought to sway with us. Neither is it the calling of those that are subjects, to enquire over-curiously into the mysteries of government; for *that*, both in peace and war, breeds much disturbance, and would trouble all designs.



Cap. 17.

Nimis angusta innocentia est, ad legem bonum esse.

The laws under which we live, are particular determinations of the law of God in some duties of the *second table*. For example, The Law of God saies, *Exact no more than what is thy due*. But what in particular is thy due, and what *another mans*, the laws of men determine, and therefore ought to be a rule unto us so farre as they reach; though it be too narrow a rule to be good *only* so farre as mans law guides unto. Yet *law* being the joynt reason and consent of many men for publique good, hath an use for guidance of all actions that fall under the same. Where it dashes not against Gods law, what is agreeable to *law* is agreeable to *conscience*.

The law of God in the due enlargement of it, to the least beginning and occasions is exceeding broad, and allowes of whatsoever stands with the light of reason, or the bonds of humanity, civility, &c. and whatsoever is against these, is *so farre* against Gods law. So that higher rules be looked to in the first place, there is nothing lovely, or praise-worthy among men, but ought to be seriously thought on.

Nature of it selfe is wild and untamed,
and



and impatient of the yoke; but as beasts that cannot indure the yoke at first, after they are inured a while unto it beare it willingly, and carry their worke more easily by it; So the yoke of obedience, makes the life regular and quiet. The meeting of authority and obedience together maintaines the order and peace of the world.

So of that question.

Though blindfold obedience, such as our *Adversaries* would have, be such as will never stand with sound peace of conscience, which alwaies lookes to have light to direct it; (for else a blinde conscience would breed blinde feares) yet in such doubtfull cases wherein wee cannot winde out our selves, we ought to light our candles at others; whom wee have cause to think by their *place* and *parts* should see further then we. In matters of outward estate, we will have men skilfull, of our counsell; and Christians would finde more sound peace, if they would advise with their godly and learned Pastors and friends. Where there is not a direct word, there is place for the counsell of a prudent man. And it is a happiness

5.

*Sententia
boni viri.*



Gap. 17.

pinesse for them whose *businessse* is much, and *parts* not large, to have the benefit of those that can give ayme, and see further than themselves. The meanest Christian understands his own way, and knows how to doe things with better advantage to his soule, than a gracelesse though learned man; yet is still glad of further discovery. *In counsell there is peace, the thoughts being thus established.*

When wee have advised and served Gods *providence* in the use of meanes, then if it fall out otherwise then we look for, we may confidently conclude, that God would not have it so, otherwise to our grieve we may say, it was the fruit of our owne rashnesse.

Where we have cause to thinke that we have used better meanes in the search of grounds, and are more free from partiall affections than others, there we may use our owne advise more safely. Otherwise what we doe by consent from others, is more secure and lesse offensive, as being more countenanced.

In advice with others, it is not sufficient to be generally wise, but experienced and knowing in that we aske, which is an honour



honour to Gods gifts where we find them in any kinde. When we set about things in *passion*, we work not as men or Christians, but in a bestiall manner. The more passion, the lesse discretion; because passion hinders the sight of what is to be done. It clouds the soule, and puts it on to action without advisement. Where passions are subdued, and the soule purged and cleared, there is nothing to hinder the impression of Gods Spirit; the soule is fitted as a cleane glasse to receive light from above. And that is the reason why *mortified men* are *fittest* to advise with in the particular cases incident to a Christian life.

After all advise, extract what is *fittest*, and what our spirits doe most bend unto: For in things that concerne our selves, God affords a light to discern out of what is spoken, what best suiteth us. And every man is to follow most what his owne *conscience*, (after information) dictates unto him; because conscience is Gods deputy in us, and under God most to be regarded, and whosoever sinnes against it, in his owne Construction sinnes against God. God vouchsafeth every
Christian

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Christian in some degree, the grace of *spirituall prudence*, whereby they are enabled to discern what is fittest to be done in things that fall within their compasse.

7.

It is good to observe the particular becks of providence, how things joyne and meet together: fit occasions and furing of things are intimations of Gods will. *Providence* hath a language, which is well understood by *those* that have a familiar acquaintance with Gods dealing, they see a traine of providence, leading one way more than to another.

8.

Take especiall heed of not grieving the Spirit, when hee offers to be our guide, by studying evasions, and wishing the case were otherwise. This is to be Law-givers to our selves, thinking that we are wiser than God. The use of discretion is not to direct us about the end, whether we should doe well or ill, (for a single heart alwaies aymes at good:) but when we resolve upon doing well, and yet doubt of the manner how to performe it, discretion looks not so much to what is lawfull, (for that is taken for granted,) but what is most expedient. A discreet man looks not to what is *best*, so much as what is *fittest* in such

such and such respects, by eying circumstances, which if they sort not, doe vary the nature of the thing it selfe.

And because it is not in *man* to know his owne waies, wee should looke up unto *Christ* the great *Counsellour* of his *Church*, to vouchsafe the spirit of counsell and direction to us; that may *make our way plain before us*, by suggesting unto us, *this is the way, walke in it*. We owe God this respect, to depend upon him for direction in the *particular* passages of our lives, in regard that he is our *Soveraigne*, and his will is the *rule*, and we are to be accountable to him as our *Judge*. It is God only that can see through businesses, and all helps and lets that stand about.

After we have rolled our selves upon God, we should immediately take that course he inclines our hearts unto, without further distracting feare. Otherwise it is a signe we *commit not our way unto him*, when we doe not quietly *trust him*, but remain still as thoughtfull, as if we did not trust him. After *prayer* and *trust* follows the *peace of God*, and a heart void of further dividing *care*. We should therefore presently question our hearts, for questioning

Phil. 2. 4.

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stioning his care, and not regard what feare will be ready to suggest, for that is apt to raise conclusions against our selves, out of selfe-conceited grounds, whereby wee usurpe upon G O D, and wrong our selves.

Dan. 3.

It was a good resolution of the three young men in Daniel, Wee are not carefull to answer thee O King. We know our duty, let God doe with us as hee pleaseth. If Abraham had hearkned to the voice of nature, he would never have resolved to sacrifice Isaac, but because hee cast himselfe upon Gods providing, God in the Mount provided a Ramme in stead of his Sonne.

C A P. XVIII.

Other grounds of trusting in God: namely the Promises. And twelve directions about the same.

§. I.

There must be a discovery of the mind of God, as well as of his nature.

BUT for the better setting of our trust in God, a further discovery is necessary than of the nature and providence of God; for though the nature of God be written in the booke of the Creatures in so great letters, as he that runs may reade; and though

though the *providence* of God appears in the order and use of things: yet there is *another booke* whereby to know the will of God towards us, and our duty towards him: We must therefore have a knowledge of the *promises* of God, as well as of his *providence*; for though God hath discovered himselfe most graciously in Christ unto us, yet had we not a word of *promise*, we could not have the boldnesse to build upon Christ *himselfe*; therefore from the same grounds (that *there is a God*) there must be a revealing of the will of God, for else we can never have any firme *trust* in him further than he offers himself to be *trusted*; Therefore hath God opened his heart to us in his *word*, and reached out so many sweet *promises* for us to lay hold on, and stooped so low, (by gracious *condescending* mixed with *authority*) as to enter into a covenant with us to perform all things for our good: for *promises* are (as it were) the stay of the soule in an *imperfect* condition, and so is *faith* in them untill all *promises* shall end in *performance*, and *faith* in *fight*, and *hope* in *possession*.

Now these promises are 1. for their *spring* from whence they proceed, *free*
ingage-

I.

Cap. 18.

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Rom. 8. 39

Heb. 13. 8.

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2.

Engagements of God; for if hee had not bound himselfe, who could? and 2. they are for their value *precious*; and 3. for their *extent* large, even of all things that conduce to happinesse; and 4. for their *ver-tue* quickning and strengthening the soule, as comming from the love of God, and conveying that love unto us by his *Spirit* in the best fruits thereof; and 5. for their *certainly*, they are as sure as the Love of God in Christ is, upon which they are founded, and from which *nothing can separate us*. For all promises are either Christ himselfe, (*the promised seed*) or else they are of good things made to us *in him* and *for him*, and accomplished for his sake; they are all made *first* to him as *heire of the promise*, as *Angel of the Covenant*, as *head* of his body, and as our *Elder brother*, &c. for *promises* being the fruits of Gods love, and Gods love being founded *first* on Christ, it must needs follow that all the promises are both made, and made good to us in and through him, who is *yesterday and to day, and for ever the same*.

That we should not call Gods love into question, he not onely gives us his *word*, but a binding word, *his promise*; and

and not onely a *naked* promise, but hath entred into *Covenant* with us, founded upon full satisfaction by the blood of Christ, and unto this *Covenant* *sealed* by the blood of the Lord J^esus, he hath added the *seales* of *Sacraments*, and unto this he hath added his *oath*, that there might be no place left of doubting to the distrustfull heart of man; there is no way of securing *promises* amongst *men*, but God hath taken the same to *himselfe*, and all to this end that we might not only *know* his minde towards us, but bee fully *perswaded* of it, that as verily as he *lives*, he will make good what ever he hath promised for the comfort of his Children. What greater assurance can there be, than for being *is selfe* to lay his being to pawn: and for life *is selfe* to lay life to pawn, and all to comfort a poore soule?

The boundlesse and restless desire of mans spirit will never be stayed without some discovery of the *chiefe good*, and the way to attaine the same: men would have been in darknesse about their finall condition, and the way to please God, and to pacifie and purge their consciences, had not the word of God set down



Cap. 18.

Psal. 19.7.

down the *spring* and *cause* of all evill, together with the cure of it and directed us how to have communion with G O D, and to raise our selves above all the evill which we meet withall betwixt us and happinesse, and to make us every way *wise to salvation*. Hence it is that the *Psalmist* preferres the manifestation of God by his *word*, before the manifestation of him in his most glorious *works*.

And thus wee see the necessity of a double principle for *faith* to rely on, 1. *God*, and 2. *the word of God* revealing his will unto us, and directing us to make use of all his *Attributes*, *Relations*, and *providence* for our good; and this *word* hath its strength from him who gives a being and an accomplishment unto it; for *words* are as the Authority of *him* that uttereth them is; When we look upon a *Grant* in the word of a *King*, it stayes our minds, because we know he is able to make it good; and why should it not satisfie our soules to looke upon *promises* in the word of a *God*? whole words, as they come from his *truth* and expresse his *goodnesse*, so they are all made good by his *power* and *wisdom*.

By

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth (without any other foundation) hangs in the midst of the world, therefore well may the soul stay it selfe on *that*, even when it hath nothing else in sight to rely upon; By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and the preservation of the world from any further overflowing of waters continueth; which if it should faile, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firme for ever, though the whole frame of nature were dissolved.

Trust must answer the truth of God.

When we have thus gotten a fit foundation for the soule to lay it selfe upon, our next care must be (by *trusting*) to build on the same; All our misery is either in having a *false foundation*, or else in *loose building* upon a true; therefore having so strong a ground as Gods Nature, his providence, his promise, &c. to build upon, the onely way for establishing our soules is (by *trust*) to rely firmly on him.

Why faith is requisite in Christians.

Now the reason why *Trust* is so much required, is because 1. it *emptieth* the soul, and 2. by emptying enlargeth it, and 3. seasoneth and fitteth the soule to joyne

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Cap. 18.

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with so gracious an object, and 4. filleth it by carrying it out of it selfe unto God, who presently (so soone as he is trusted in) conueyes himselfe and his goodnesse to the soule; and thus we come to have the comfort, and God the glory of all his excellencies. Thus salvation comes to be sure unto us, whilst *faith* looking to the *promises* (and to God freely offering grace therein) resignes up it selfe to God, making no further question from any unworthinesse of its owne.

Jr. 31. 3.

And thus we returne to GOD by cleaving to him, from whom we fell by *dis-trust*, living under a *new covenant* meere-ly of *grace*; And no *grace* fitter than that which gives all to CHRIST, considering the fountain of all our good is (out of our selves) *in him*, it being safest for us (who were so ill husbands at the first) that it should be so, therefore it is fit we should have use of such a grace that will carry us out of our *selves* to the spring head.

The way then whereby *faith* quieteth the soule, is by raising it *above* all discontentments and stormes here below, and pitching it upon God, thereby uniting it

to

to him, whence it draws *vertue* to oppose and bring under whatsoever troubles its peace. For the soule is made for God, and never findes rest till it returns to him againe; when God and the soule meet, there will follow contentment; God (simply considered) is not all our happinesse, but God as *trusted in*; and Christ as we are made *one with him*; The soule cannot so much as *touch* the *hemme* of *Christs garment*, but it shall finde *vertue comming from him* to sanctifie and settle it; God in Christ is full of all that is good; when the soule is *emptied, enlarged* and *opened* by faith to receive goodnesse offered, there must needs follow sweet satisfaction.

§. 2.

For the better strengthening of our *trust*, it is not sufficient that we trust *in God* and his *truth* revealed, but we must doe it by *light* and *strength* from him: Many believe in the truth by *humane* arguments, but no arguments will convince the soule but such as are ferched from the *inward* nature, and *powerfull* worke of truth it selfe; No man can know God, but by God; None can know the *Sunne*, but by

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Mat. 9. 20.

Directions
about tru-
sting.

I.

It must be
by divine
light.

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its owne light; None can know the *truth* of God (so as to build upon it) but by the *truth is selfe* and the *Spirit* revealing it by its *owne light* to the soule; that soul which hath felt the power of truth in casting it downe, and raising it up again, will easily be brought to *rest* upon it; It is neither *education*, nor the authority of *others* that professe the same *truth*, or that we have been so taught by men of *great parts*, &c. will settle the heart; untill we find an *inward power* and *authority* in the *truth is selfe* shining in our hearts by its *owne beames*; hence comes unsetlednesse in time of *troubles*, because we have not a *spirituall discerning* of spirituall things. Supernaturall truths must have a supernaturall power to apprehend them, therefore God createth a spirituall eye and hand of the soule which is *faith*.

Esa. 54. 13

In those that are truly converted, all *saving truths* are transcribed out of the *Scripture* into their hearts, *they are taught of God*; So as they find all truths both concerning the *sinfull estate*, and the gracious and *happy estate* of man in *themselves*; they carry a *divinity* in them and about them, so as from a *saving feeling* they

they can speake of *conversion*, of *sin*, of *grace*, and the *comforts of the Spirit*, &c. and from this acquaintance are ready to yeeld and give up themselves to truth revealed and to God speaking by it. *Trust* is never sound but upon a spiritual *conviction* of the truth and goodnesse we rely upon, for the effecting of which the Spirit of God must likewise *subdue* the *rebellion* and *malice* of our *will*, that so it may be suitable and leuell to *divine* things, and relish them as they are; we must apprehend the *love of God* and the *fruits of it* as better then life it selfe; and then choosing and *cleaving* to the same will soon follow; for as there is a *fitnesse in divine truths* to all the necessities of the soule, so the Soule must be fitted *by them* to *savour* and *apply* them to *it selfe*; and then from an *harmony* betweene the *soule* and *that* which it applyes it selfe unto, there will follow not onely *peace* in the soule, but *joy* and *delights* surpassing any contentment in the world besides.

As there is in God to satisfie the whole soule, so *trust* carries the whole soule to God; this makes *trust* not so easie a matter, because there must be an exercise of

2.
By subdu-
ing and
changing
the will.

3.
By carry-
ing the whole
soule to
God.

Cap. 18.

every faculty of the soule or else our trust is imperfect and lame, there must bee a knowledge of him whom wee trust, and why we trust, an affiance and love, &c. Onely they that know God will trust in him; not that knowledge alone is sufficient, but because the sweetnesse of Gods love is let into the soule thereby, which draweth the whole soule to him; We are bidden to trust perfectly in God; therefore seeing we have a God so full of perfection to trust in; wee should labour to trust perfectly in him.

By putting
cases to
our selves.

And it is good for the exercise of trust to put cases to our selves of things that probably may fall out, and then returne to our soules to search what strength wee have if such things should come to passe; thus David puts cases; perfect faith dares put the hardest cases to its soule, and then set God against all that may befall it.

Psa. 3. 6.
Psal. 46. 3.
Psal. 27. 3.

3.
By fitting
the promise to e-
very con-
dition of
our lives.

Againe, labour to fit the promise to every condition thou art in; there is no condition, but hath a promise suitable therefore no condition but wherein God may be trusted, because his truth and goodnesse is always the same; And in the promise, looke both to the good promised, and to the faithfulness

ness and love of the *promiser*; It is not good to looke upon the *difficulty* of the thing wee have a promise against, but who promiseth it, and for whose sake, and so see all good things in *Christ* made over to us.

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We should labour likewise for a *single heart* to trust in God *onely*; there is no readier way to fall than to trust *equally* to two stayes, whereof *one* is rotten, and the *other* sound; therefore as in point of *doctrine* we are to rely upon *Christ onely*, and to make the Scriptures our rule *onely*; so in life and *conversation*, what ever we make use of, yet we should *enjoy* and rely upon God *onely*; for either God is trusted *alone*, or not at all; those that trust to other things *with God*, trust not *him* but upon *pretence* to carry their *double mindes* with lesse check.

6.
By trust-
ing in God
alone.

Again, labour that thy soul may answer all the *Relations* wherein it stands to God, by *cleaving* to him, 1. as a *Father* by trusting on his care, 2. as a *Teacher* by following his direction, 3. as a *Creator* by dependence on him, 4. as a *Husband* by inseparable affection of love to him, 5. as a *Lord* by obedience, &c. And then wee may with comfort expect whatsoever

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good these *Relations* can yeeld: All which, God regarding more *our* wants and weaknesse, than *his own* greatnesse, hath taken upon him. Shall these *Relations* yeeld comfort from the *creature*, and not from *God himselfe*, in whom they are in their highest perfection? Shall God make other *fathers* and *husbands* faithfull, and not be faithfull *himselfe*? All our comfort depends upon labouring to make these *Relations* good to our soules.

8.

By trusting
God for all
things in
all times.

And as we must *wholly* and *only* trust in God, so likewise wee must trust him in all conditions and times, for all things that we stand in need of, untill that time comes, wherein we shall stand in need of nothing: for as the same care of God moved him to *save us*, and to *preserve us* in the world till we be put in possession of salvation; So the same *faith* relies upon God for *heaven* and all necessary *provision* till we come thither; It is the office of *Faith* to quiet our soules in all the necessities of this life, and we have continuall use of trusting while we are *here*: For even when we have things, yet God still keepes the blessing of them in his owne hands, to hold us in a continuall dependence

dence upon him: God traines us up this way, by exercising our *trust* in lesser matters, to fit us for greater; thus it pleaseth God to keepe us in a depending condition untill he see his owne time; but-so good is God that as he intends to give us what we *wait for*, so will he give us the grace and spirit of faith, to *sustaine* our soules in waiting till we enjoy the same. The unrulinesse of a *naturall* spirit is never discovered more, than when God *defers*, therefore we should labour the more not to withdraw our attendance from God.

Further, we must know that the condition of a Christian in this life, is *not to see* what he trusts God for, (*hee lives by faith, and not by sight*) and yet that there is such a vertue in *faith*, which makes *evident* and present, things to come and *un-seene*: Because God where he gives an *eye of faith*, gives also a glasse of the *word* to see things *in* and by seeing of them in the *truth* and *power* of him that *promiseth*, they become *present*, not only to the *understanding* to apprehend them, but to the *will* to rest upon them, and to the *affections* to joy in them: It is the nature of *faith*

to

9.

By trusting
God when
it sees no
helpe.

2 Cor. 1. 7.

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Why God
suffers his
children to
fall into
great ex-
tremities.

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Christians
should
trust God
most in
the worst
times.

to worke, when it *seeth nothing*, and oftentimes best of all *then*, because God shewes himselfe more clearly in his *power*, *wisdome*, and *goodnesse*, at such times; and so his glory shines most, and faith hath nothing else to looke upon then, whereupon it gathers all the forces of the soule together, to fasten upon God.

It should therefore be the chiefe care of a Christian to strengthen his *faith*, that so it may answer Gods manner of dealing with him in the worst times; for God usually (1. that he might perfectly mortifie our confidence in the creature, and 2. that he might the more *indeare* his *favours* and make them *fresh* and new unto us, and 3. that the *glory* of deliverance may bee intirely *his*, without the creatures sharing with him, and 4. that our *faith* and *obedience* may bee *tryed* to the uttermost, and discovered) suffers his children to fall into great *extremities* before he will reach forth his hand to helpe them, as in *Jabs* case, &c. Therefore Christians should much labour their hearts to *trust* in God in the *deepest extremities* that may befall them, even when *no light* of comfort *appeares* either from

The Soules Conflict.

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from *within* or *without*, yea then (especially) when all other comforts fail, *despaire* is oft the ground of *hope*; when the darknes of the night is thickest, then the morning begins to dawne; that which (to a man unacquainted with Gods dealings) is a ground of utter *despaire*, the same (to a man acquainted with the waies of God) is a rise of exceeding *comfort*; for *infinite* power and goodness can never be at a loss, neither can faith which looks to *that*, ever be at a stand, whence it is that both *God* and *Faith* worke best alone; in a hopelesse estate a Christian will see some *doore of hope* opened, 1. because God shewes himselfe nearest to us, when wee stand most in need of him; *Helpe Lord, for vain is the helpe of man*: God is never more seen than in the *Mount*; He *knows our soules best*, and our souls know him best in *adversity*; then he is most *wonderfull in his Saints*. 2. Because our prayers then are (*strong cries*) fervent and frequent; God is sure to heare of us at such a time, which pleaseth him well, as delighting to heare the *voice* of his *Beloved*.

* For our better encouragement in these sad times, and to helpe our *trust* in God the

Cap. 18.
Esa. 50. 10.

I.

Ps. 31. 7.

2.

* 10.

By calling to minde former experiences of Gods love.

Cap. 18.

Psal. 22. 4.

Psal. 9. 10.

Psal. 119.

140.

Psal. 12. 6.

the more, we should often call to minde the former *experiences*, which either our *selves* or *others* have had of Gods goodnesse, and make use of the same for our spirituall good; *Our Father trusted in thee*, (saith the head of the Church) *and were not confounded*; Gods *truth* and *goodnesse* is unchangeable, *he never leaves those that trust in him*; so likewise in our owne experiences, we should take notice of Gods dealings with us in sundry kindes, how many wayes he hath refreshed us, and how good wee have found him in our worst times; After we have once tryed *him* and *his truth*, we may safely trust him; God will stand upon his credit, he never failed any yet, and he will not begin to breake with us; If his *nature* and his *word*, and his former *dealing* hath been sure and square, why should our hearts be wavering? *thy word* (saith the Psalmist) *is very pure* (or tryed) *therefore thy servant loveth it*; the word of God is *as silver tryed in the furnace, purified seven times*; it is good therefore to observe and lay up Gods dealings; Experience is nothing else, but a multiplyed remembrance of former blessings, which will helpe to multiply

Christians
should
communi-
cate their
experien-
ces.

Pla. 66, 19.

Pla. 143, 1

multiply our faith; tryed *truth* and tryed
faith unto it, sweetely agree and answer
one another; It were a course much ten-
ding to the quickning of the faith of Chri-
stians, if they would communicate one to
another their mutuall experiences; this
hath formerly been the custome of Gods
people. *Come and heare all yee that feare
God, and I will declare what he hath done
for my soule*; And David urgeth this as a
reason to God for *deliverance*, that then
the righteous would compasse him about,
as rejoycing in the experience of Gods
goodnesse to *him*; The want of this
makes us upon any new tryall to call
Gods care and love into question, as if he
had never formerly been good unto us;
whereas every *experiment* of Gods love
should refresh our faith upon any fresh
onset; God is so good to his children even
in this world. that he traines them up by
daily renewed *experiences* of his fatherly
care; for besides those many *promises* of
good things to *come*, he gives us some
evidence and taste of what we believe *here*;
that by that which we *fee*le we might be
strengthened in that we *looke for*, that so
in both (1. *sense* of what we *fee*le, and

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II.

By walking in the wayes of God.

2. *certainty* of what we looke for) wee might have full support.

But yet we must *trust God*, as hee will be trusted, (namely, *in doing good*;) or else we doe not trust him but *tempt* him, Our commanding of our soules to trust in God, is but an *Echo*, of what God commands us first; and therefore in the same manner *he* commands us, we should command *our selves*. As God commands us to trust him in doing good, so should we *commit our soules* to him *in well doing*, and trust him when wee are about his *owne* workes, and not in the workes of darknesse; we may safely expect God in his *wayes of mercy*, when we are in his wayes of *obediense*; For *Religion* as it is a doctrine of what is to be *beleevd*, so it is a doctrine according to *godlinesse*; and the mysteries of *faith* are *mysteries of godlinesse*, because they cannot be beleevd, but they will inforce a Godly conversation; where any true impression of them is, there is holinesse alwayes bred in that soule; therefore a study of *holinesse* must goe *joyntly* together with a study of *trusting* in God; *faith* lookes not onely to *promises*, but to directions to *duty*, and breeds in the soule a
liking

liking of whatsoever pleaseth God; There is a *mutuall* strengthning in things that are good; *trusting* stirres to *duty*, and *duty* *strengthens* trusting by increasing our liberty and boldnesse with God.

Againe, wee must mainetaine in our soules, a *high esteeme* of the grace of *faith*; the very *tryall* whereof is more *precious* than gold, what then is the grace of *faith* it selfe, and the *promises* which it layeth hold on? certainly they transcend in *worth* what ever may draw us from God; whence it is that the soul sets a high price upon them, and on *faith* that beleeves them; It is impossible that any thing in the world should come betwixt the *heart* and *those things* (if once wee truly lay hold on them) to undermine *faith* or the *comfort* we have by it; the heart is never drawne to any sinfull *vanity*, or frightened with any terrour of *trouble*, till *faith* first loseth the sight and *estimation* of divine things, and forgets the *necessity* and *excellency* of them. Our Saviour Christ when he would stirre up a desire of *faith* in his Disciples, shewed them the power and excellency of the same; *great things* stirre up *faith* and keepe it above, and
faith

Cap. 18.

12.

By letting
a high
price upon
Faith.

1 Pet. 17.

Luke 17.6.

Cap. 19.

Hol. 8. 12.

faith keeps the soule that nothing else can take place of abode in it; when the *great things of God* are brought into the heart by *faith*, what is there in the whole world that can out-bid them? Assurance of these things upon spirituall grounds, over-rules both *sense* and *reason*, or what ever else prevailes with carnall hearts.

CAP. XIX.

Faith to be prized, and other things undervalued, as least not to be trusted to as the chiefe.

Themeans
to get an
high e-
steeme of
Faith, is to
undervalue
all things
else.

THat *faith* may take the better place in the soule and the soule in God, the heart must continually be taught of what *little worth* all things else are, as *reputation, riches, and pleasures, &c.* and to see their *nothingnesse* in the word of God, and in experience of our selves and others, that so our heart being *weaned* from these things, may *open* it selfe to God, and imbrace things of a higher nature; otherwise *baser things* will be nearer thy soule than *faith*, and keepe possession against it so that *faith* will not be suffered to set up a throne

throne in the heart; There must bee an *unloosing* of the heart, as well as a *fastning* of it, and God helps us in both: for (besides the *word* discovering the vanity of all things else out of God) the main scope of Gods dealing with his children in any danger or affliction whatsoever, is to imbitter all other things but *himselfe* unto them: Indeed it is the power of God *properly* which makes the heart to *trust*, but yet the Spirit of God useth *this way* to bring all things else *out of request with us* in comparison of those inestimable good things, which the soule is *created, redeemed, and sanctified for*; God is very jealous of our *trust*, and can indure no *idol of jealousie* to be set up in our hearts. Therefore it behooves us to take notice, not onely of the *deceitfulness* of things, but of the deceitfulness of *our hearts* in the use of them; Our hearts naturally hang loose from God, and are soone ready to joync with the *creature*; Now the more we observe our hearts in this, the more we take them off, and labour to set them where they should bee placed, for the more we know these things, the lesse we shall *trust* them.

Cap. 19.

Object.

Answ.

But may wee not trust in *riches*, and *friends*, and other outward helps at all?

Yes, so farre as they are subordinate to God our chiefe stay, with reservation and submission to the Lord; onely so far, and so long as it shall please him to use them for our good. Because God ordinarily conveyes his helpe and goodnesse to us by some creature; we must trust in God to blesse every mercy we enjoy, and to make all helps serviceable to his love towards us. In a word, wee must *trust* and *use* them *in* and *under* God, and so as if all were taken away, yet to thinke God (Being *al-sufficient*) can do without them, whatsoever he doth by them for our good. *Faith* preserves the *chastitie* of the soule, and *cleaving* to God is a spirituall *debt* which it oweth to him, whereas cleaving to the creature, is spirituall *adultery*.

1.

It is an error in the *foundation* to substitute *false objects* either in *Religion*, or in *Christian Conversation*; for 1. in *religion* trusting in false objects, as *Saints*, and *works*, &c. breeds false *worship*, and false

2.

worship breeds *Idolatrie*, and so Gods *jealousie*, and *hatred*. 2. In *Christian Conversation* false objects of trust breed *false*
comforts,

comforts, and true feares; for in what measure we *trust* in any thing that is *uncertaine*, in the same measure will our griefe be when it failes us; the more men relie upon deceitfull Crutches the greater is their fall; God can neither indure *false* objects, nor a *double object*, (as hath been shewed) for a man to relie upon any thing *equally* in the same ranke with himselfe; for the propounding of a double object, argues a *double heart*, and a double heart is alwaies *unsettled*, for it will regard God no longer than it can enjoy that which it joynes together with him; Therefore it is said, *You cannot serve two Masters*, not subordinate one to another; whence it was that our Saviour told those *worldly men* which followed him, *that they could not beleeve in him, because they sought honour one of another*; and in case of competition, if their *honour* and *reparation* should come into question, they would be sure to be false to Christ, and rather part with him than their own credit and esteeme in the world.

James 1.8.

Luk 16.13.

Joh. 8.44.

David (here) by charging his soule to *trust in God*, saw there was nothing else that could bring true rest and quiet unto him;

Сар. 19.

Plal. 30.6.

8.1.2011

I.

1891. 1892. 1893.

3.

44-38861-101

him; for whatſoever is *beſides* God, is but a *creature*; and what ever is in the creature, is but *borrowed*, and at Gods diſpoſing; and *changeable*, or elſe it were not a creature; *David* ſaw his error ſoon, for the ground of his diſquiet was truſting ſome thing elſe beſides God, therefore when he began to ſay, *My hill is ſtrong, I ſhall not be moved, &c.* then preſently *his ſoule was troubled*. Out of God there is nothing fit for the ſoul to ſtay itſelf upon; for
1. *Outward* things are not fitted to the ſpirituall nature of the ſoule; they are dead things and cannot touch it being a *lively ſpirit*, unleſſe by way of taint.

2. They are beneath the worth of the soule and therefore debase the soule, and draw it lower than *it selfe*. As a Noble woman, by matching with a *meane* person much injures her selfe, especially when *higher* matches are offered. Earthly things are not given for *Stages* wholly to rest on, but for *Comforts* in our way to Heaven; they are no more fit for the soule, than that which hath many *angles* is fit to fill up that which is *round*, which it cannot doe, because of the unevenesse and void places that will remaine, Outward

Outward things are never so well fitted for the soule, but that the soule will presently see some voidnesse and emptinesse in them, and in it selfe in cleaving to them; for that which shall be a fit object for the soule, must be 1. for the nature of it *spirituall*, (as the soule it selfe is) 2. *constant*, 3. *full*, and *satisfying*, 4. of equall continuance with it, and 5. alwaies yeelding fresh contents: wee cast away *flowers*, after once we have had the *sweetnesse* of them, because there is not still a fresh supply of sweetnesse. What ever comfort is in the *creature*, the soule will spend quickly, and looke still for more; whereas the comfort we have in God is *undefiled* and *fadeth not away*; How can we trust to *this* for comfort, which by very *trusting* proves uncomfortable to us? Outward things are onely so far forth good, as wee *doe not* trust in them; *thorns* may be *touch'd*, but not *rested on*, for then they will pierce; we must not set our hearts upon those things which are never *evill* to us; but when we *set our hearts upon them*.

Psa. 63. 10.

Jer. 17. 5.

By trusting any thing but God, wee make it 1. an *idol*, 2. a *curse* and not a *blessing*.

Cap. 19.

blessing, 3. it will prove a *lying vanity*, not yeelding that good which wee look for, and 4. a *vexation*, bringing that evill upon us we look not for.

Ecclef. 1 2.

Of all men *Solomon* was the fittest to judge of this, because 1. he had a large heart able to comprehend the variety of things, and 2. (being a mighty King) had advantages of procuring all outward things that might give him satisfaction, and 3. he had a desire answerable, to search out and extract whatever good the creature could yeeld; and yet upon the *trial* of all, he passeth this verdict *upon all*, that they are *but vanity*; whilest he laboured to find that which he sought for in them, hee had like to have lost himselfe; and seeking too much to strengthen himself by forein combination, he weakned himselfe the more thereby, untill he came to know where the *whole of man* consists.

Ecclef. 12.
13.

So that now we need not try further conclusions after the peremptory sentence of so wise a man.

But our nature is still apt to thinke there is some secret good in the *forbidden fruit*, and to buy wisedome dearly when we might have it at a cheaper rate, even from

from former universall experience.

It is a matter both to bee wondred at and pityed, that the soule having God in Christ set before it, alluring it unto him, that he might raise it, inlarge it, and fill it and so make it above all other things, should yet debase and make it selfe narrower and weaker by leaning to things meaner than it selfe.

The Kingdome, Sovereignty, and large command of *Man*, continueth while he rests upon God, in whom he reignes (in some sort) over all things under him; but so soone as hee removes from God to any thing else, he becomes weak and narrow and slavish presently; for,

The soule is as that which it relies upon; if on *vanity*, it selfe becomes vain; for that which contents the soule must satisfie all the wants and desires of it, which no particular thing can doe, and the soule is more sensible of a little thing that it wants, than of all other things which it injoyes.

But see the *insufficiency* of all other things (out of God) to support the soule, in their severall degrees. *First*, All *outward* things can make a man no happier than

I.

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2.

Esa 47. 10.

than outward things can doe, they cannot reach beyond their proper spheare; but our *greatest* grievances are *spirituall*. And as for inward things, whether *gifts* or *graces*, they cannot be a sufficient stay for the minde; for 1. *gifts* as policy and wilddome &c. they are at the best very defective, especially when we *trust in them*; for *wisedome* makes men oftner to *rebell*, and thereupon God delighteth to blast their projects: None miscarry oftner than men of the *greatest parts*; as none are oftner drowned than those that are most *skilfull* in swimming, because it makes them *confident*,

And for *grace* though it be the beginning of a new creature in us, yet it is but a *creature*, and therefore not to be trusted in, nay by trusting in it we imbase it, and make it more *imperfect*; so farre as there is truth of grace, it breeds distrust of our selves, and carryes the soule out of it selfe to the fountaine of strength.

3.

And for any workes that proceed from grace, by *trusting* thereunto they prove like the *reed* of Egypt, which not onely deceives us, but hurts us with the splinters: Good workes are *good*, but
confidence

confidence in them is hurtfull; and there is more of our *owne* in them (for the most part) to humble us, than of Gods Spirit to embolden us so far as to trust in them. Alas they have nothing from us, but weakness and defilement, and therefore *since the fall*, G O D would have the object of our *trust* to be (*out of our selves*) *in him*; and to that purpose he useth all means to take us out of *our selves*, and from the creature, that *he* onely might be *our trust*.

Yea, wee must not trust *trust it selfe*, but God whom it relies on, who is therefore called our *trust*. All the glorious things that are spoken of *trust* are onely made good by God in Christ, who (as trusted) doth all for us.

God hath prescribed *trust*, as the way to carry our soules to *himselfe*, in whom we should onely rely, and not in our imperfect *trust*, which hath its ebbing and flowing; Neither will *trust* in God himselfe for the *present* suffice us for *future* strength and grace, as if *trusting* in God *to day*, would suffice to strengthen us for *to morrow*; but we must *renew* our trust for *fresh* supply, upon every fresh *occasion*. So that we see God *alone* must be the *object* of our *trust*.

There

Cap. 19.

There is still left in mans nature a desire of *pleasure, profit*, and of what ever the *creature* presents as *good*, but the desire of gracious good is altogether lost, the soule being wholly infected with a contrary taste. Man hath a nature capable of *excellency*, and desirous of it, and the Spirit of God *in* and *by the word* reveales where true excellency is to be had; but corrupt nature *leaving God*, seeketh it elsewhere, and so croseth its owne desires, till the Spirit of God discovers where these things are to be had, and so *nature* is brought to its right frame again, by turning the streame into the right current; *Grace*, and *sinfull nature*, have the same generall *object* of comfort; onely *sinfull nature* seekes it in *broken Cisterns*, and *grace* in the *fountain*; the beginning of our true happinelle is from the discovery of *true* and *false* objects, so as the soule may cleerely see what is best and safest, and then stedfastly rely upon it.

We should labour to subdue the first inclination of our soules to the creatures.

It were an happy way to make the soul better acquainted with trusting in God, to labour to subdue at the *first* all unruly inclinations of the soul to earthly things, and to take advantage of the first tender-
nesse

ness of the soule, to weede out that which is ill, and to plant *knowledge* and *love* of the best things in it; otherwise where affections to any thing below get much strength in the soule, it will by little and little be so overgrowne, that there will be no place left in it, either for (*object* or *act*) God or trust; God cannot come to take his place in the heart by *trust*, but where the powers of the soule are brought under to regard *him* and those great things hee brings with him, above all things else in the world beside.

In these glorious times wherein so great a *light* shineth, whereby so great things are discovered, what a shame is it to be so narrow hearted as to fix upon *present* things; our aymes and affections should be fixable to the things themselves set before us; Our hearts should be more and more *enlarged*, as things are more and more revealed to us, We see in the things of this life, as *wisdom* and *experience* increase, so our aimes and desires increase likewise; A young beginner thinks it a great matter if he have a little to *begin withall*, but as he grows in *trading*, and seeth further wayes of getting, his thoughts

Cap. 20.

1 Cor. 13.

11.

thoughts and desires are raised higher: *Children* thinke as *Children*, but riper age puts away childishnesse, when their understandings are enlarged to see, what they did not see before: we should never rest till our hearts, according to the measure of *revelation* of those excellent things which God hath for us, have answerable apprehension of the same. Oh if we had but faith to answer those glorious truths which God hath revealed, what manner of lives should we leade!

CAP. XX.

Of the method of trusting in God: and the tryall of that trust.

13.

Our trust-
ing should
follow
Gods or-
der of pro-
mising.

LAstly, (to add no more) our *trusting* in God should follow Gods order in *promising*. The first promise is of *forgiveness* of *sinne* to repentant beleivers: next
2. of *healing* and *sanctifying* grace: then
3. *the inheritance of the Kingdome of Heaven* to them that are *sanctified*: 4. and then the promises of *all things needfull in our way to the Kingdome*, &c. Now answerably, the soule being inlightned to see its danger

danger, should looke *first* to Gods mercy in Christ *pardoning sinne*, because sin onely divides betwixt God and the soule; *next*, to the *promises of grace* for the leading of a Christian life, for true faith desires *healing* mercy, as well as *pardoning* mercy; and then to *Heaven* and all things that may bring us thither.

By all this we see that it is not so easie a matter as the world takes it, to bring God and the soule together by *trusting* on him; it must be effected by the *mighty power* of God, *raising up* the soule to himselfe, to lay hold upon the glorious power, goodnesse, and other *excellencies* that that are in *him*; God is not onely the *object*, but the working *cause* of our *trust*; for such is our pronenesse to live by *sense*, and natural *reason*, and such is the strangenesse and height of *divine* things, such our inclination to a *selfe-sufficiency* and contentment in the *creature*, and so hard a matter is it to take off the soule from *false* bottoms, by reason of our unacquaintance with God and his wayes; besides such guilt still remaines upon our soules for our rebellion and unkindnesse towards God: that it makes us afraid to entertain
serious

Cap. 10.

Eph. 1.20.

Cap. 10.

serious thoughts of him; and so great is the distance betwixt his *infinite* Majesty, (before whom the very *Angels* doe cover their faces) and *us*, by reason of the *unspiritualnesse* of our nature, being opposite to his most *absolute* purity, that wee cannot be brought to any *familiarity* with the Lord (so as to come into his holy presence with *confidence* to rely upon him, or any comfort to have communion with him,) till our hearts be sanctified and lifted up by *divine vigour* infused into them.

Though there be some *inclination* by reason of the remainder of the image of God in us, to an outward *mōrall* obedience of the *Law*, yet alas, we have not onely *no seeds* of *Evangelicall* truths and of faith to beleeve them, but an utter *contrariety* in our *natures* (as corrupted) either to this, or any other good. When our conscience is once awaked, wee meditate nothing but *feares* and *terrors*, and dare not so much as thinke of an angry God, but rather how we may escape & fly from him. Therefore together with a deep consideration of the grounds wee have of *trusting* God, it is necessary wee should thinke of the indisposition of our hearts
unto

unto it, especially when there is greatest need thereof, that so our hearts may be forced to put up that petition of the *Disciples* to God; *Lord increase our faith, Lord helpe us against our unbelieving hearts, &c.* By prayer and holy thoughts stirred up in the use of the meanes, wee shall feel divine strength infused and conveyed into our soules to *trust*.

The more care we ought to have to maintaine our trust in God, because (besides the hardnesse of it) it is a radicall and fundamentall grace; it is as it were the *mother root* and great *veyne* whence the exercise of all graces have their beginning and strength. The decay of a plant though it *appeares* first from the withering of the twigs and branches, yet it arises chiefly from a decay in the roore; So the decay of grace may appeare to the view first in our *company, carriage, and speeches, &c.* but the primitive and original ground of the same, is weaknesse of *faith* in the heart, therefore it should be our wisdom (especially) to looke to the feeding of the *roote*; wee must 1. looke that our *principles* and *foundation* be good, and 2. build strongly upon them, and 3. re-
paire

Defects in
life rise
fro defects
in *trust*.

Cap. 20.

Satans study is to unloose our hearts from God.

paine our building every day as continual breaches shall be made upon us, either by *corruptions* and *temptations* from *within* or *without*; And we shall find that the main breaches of our lives arise either from *false* principles, or doubts, or *mindlesnesse* of those that are true; All sinne is a turning of the soule from God to some other seeming good, but this proceeds from a former turning of the soule from God by distrust. As faith is the first return of the soul to God, so the first degree of departing from God is by *infidelity*, and from thence comes a departure by *other sins*, by which (as sinne is of a winding nature) our unbelieve more increaseth, and so the rent and breach betwixt our *soules* and *God* is made greater still, (which is that Satan would have) till at length by departing further and further from him, we come to have that peremptory sentence of *everlasting departure* pronounced against us; so that our departure from God *now* is a degree to separation *for ever* from him. Therefore it is Satans maine care to come between *God* and the *Soule*, that so unloosing us from God, we might more easily be drawn to *other things*; and

if he drawes us to other things, it is but onely to unloose our hearts from God the more; for hee well knowes whilst our soules cleave close to God, there is no prevailing against us by any created policy or power.

It was the cursed policy of *Balaam* to advise *Balak* to draw the people from God (by *fornication*) that so God might bee drawn from them: the sinne of their base *affections* crept into the very spirits of their minde, and drew them from God to Idolatry: Bodily *adultery* makes way for *spirituall*; An unbelceeing heart is an ill heart, and a treacherous heart, because it makes us to *depart from God*, the *living God*, &c. Therefore wee should especially take heed of it as we love our lives, yea our best life, which ariseth from the union of our soules with God.

None so opposed as a *Christian*, and in a Christian nothing so opposed as his *faith*, because it opposeth whatsoever opposes God, both *within* and *without* us: it captivates and brings under whatsoever rises up against G O D in the heart, and sets it selfe against whatsoever makes head against the soule.

Heb. 3. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Cap. 10.

What trust
in God is.The tryall
of trust.

I.

It can and
is willing
to endure
tryall.
Plal. 39.7.

And because mistake is very dangerous, and wee are prone to conceive that to *trust in God* is an easie matter, therefore it is needfull that we should have a right conceit of this *trust* what it is, and how it may be discerned, lest we trust to an untrusty *trust*, and to an unsteady stay

We may by what hath been said before, partly discern the *nature* of it, to be nothing else but an exercise of faith, whereby looking to God in Christ through the *promises*, wee take off our soules from all other supports, and lay them upon God for deliverance and upholding in all *ill, present or future*, felt or feared, and the obtaining of all *good*, which God sees expedient for us.

Now that we may discern the *truth* of our *trust in God* the better, wee must know, that true trust is *willing* to be tryed and searched, and can say to God as *David*, *Now Lord what wait I for, my hope is in thee*; and as it is willing to come to tryall, so it is able to indure tryall, and to hold out in opposition, as appeares in *David*; If faith hath a *promise*, it will rely and rest upon it, say flesh and bloud what it can to the contrary; true faith

is

as large as the *promise*, and will take Gods part against whatsoever opposes it.

Cap. 10.

And as faith singles not out one part of divine truth to beleve and rejects another, so it relies upon God for every good thing, ~~as well as another~~, the ground whereof is this. The same love of God that intends us heaven, intends us a supply of all necessities that may bring us thither.

2.
It looks to
all the pro-
mises.

A child that beleeves his father will make him *Heire*, doubts not but he will provide him food and nourishment, and give him breeding suitable to his future condition; It is a vaine pretence to beleve that God will give us heaven, and yet leavens to shift for our selves in the way.

Fides non
eligit ob-
jectum.

Where *trust* is rightly planted, it gives boldnesse to the soule in going to God, for it is grounded upon the discovery of Gods love first to us, and seeth a warrant from him for whatsoever it trusts him for; though the things themselves bee never so great, yet they are no greater than God is willing to bestow; againe, *trust* is bold because it is grounded upon the worthinesse of a *Mediator* who hath made way to Gods favour for us, and

3.
It makes
the soule
bold.

1.

Cap. 20.

appeares now in heaven to maintaine it towards us.

4.
yet humble.

Yet this boldnesse is with *humility*, which carries the soule out of it selfe; and that *boldnesse* which the soule by trust hath with God, is from God himselfe; it hath nothing to alleadge from it selfe but its owne emptinesse and Gods fulness, its owne sinfulness and Gods mercy, its owne humble obedience, and Gods command; hence it is that the true beleevers heart is not lifted up, nor swels with *selfe-confidence*; as trust comes in, that goes out; trust is never planted and growes but in an humble and low soule; trust is a holy *motion* of the soul to God, and motion arises from want; those (and those only) seek out abroad that want succour at home; *Plants* move not from place to place, because they find nourishment where they stand; but *living* creatures seek abroad for their food, and for that end have a power of moving from place to place; and this is the reason why *trust* is expressed by *going* to God.

Motus ex
indigentia.

5.
Trust is
dependent,

Hereupon *trust* is a *dependent* grace, answerable to our dependent condition; it lookes upon all things it hath or desires

to have, as comming from God and his free grace and power : it desireth not only *wisedome*, but to be wise in *his* wisedome, to see in *his* light, to be *strong* in *his* strength, the thing it selfe contents not this grace of *trust*, but Gods blessing and love in the thing, it cares not for any thing further than it can have it with Gods favour and good liking.

Hence it is that *trust* is an obsequious and an observing grace, stirring up the soule to a desire of pleasing God in all things, and to a feare of displeasing him : He that pretends to trust the Lord in a course of offending, may trust to this than God will meet him in another way that he looks for: Hee that is a tenant at *courtesie* will not offend his Lord: hence it is that the Apostle inforceth that exhortation to *worke out our salvation with feare and trembling*, because it is God that worketh the *will* and the *deed*, and according to *his good pleasure*, not *ours* : Therefore *faith* is an effectuall working grace, it workes in Heaven with God, it workes *within us*, commanding all the powers of the soule, it workes *without us*, conquering whatsoever is in the world on

6.
and obsequious.

Phil. 2. 12,
13.

Cap. 20.

the right hand to draw us from God; or on the left hand to discourage us; it works against Hell and the powers of darknesse; and all by virtue of *trusting*, as it draweth strength from God; It stirres up all other graces and keeps them in exercise, and thereupon the acts of other graces are attributed to *faith*, as Heb. 11. It breeds a holy jealousie over our selves, lest we give God just cause to stop the influence of his grace towards us, so to let us see that wee stand not by our owne strength: Those that take liberty in things they either *know* or *doubt* will displease God, shew they want the *fear* of God, and this want of feare shewes their want of *dependency*, and therefore want of *trust*; dependency is alwayes very respectiue, it studieth contentment and care to comply; this was it made *Enoch walke with God, and study how to please him*; when we know nothing can doe us good or hurt but God, it drawes our chiefe care to approve our selves to him. Obedience of *faith* and obedience of life will goe together; and therefore he that commits his soule to God to *save*, will commit his soule to God to *sanctific* and

Heb. 12.1.

and guide in a way of well pleasing : Not
only the same, but the most savage
creatures, will be at the beck of those
that feed them, though they are ready
to fall violently upon others ; disobe-
dience therefore is against the principles
of nature.

This dependency is either in the use of
meanes, or else when meanes faile us ;
true dependency is exactly carefull of all
meanes. When God hath set downe a
course of meanes, wee must not expect
that God should alter his ordinary course
of providence for us ; deserved disappoint-
ment is the fruit of this presumptuous
confidence ; the more wee depend on a
wise Physitian, the more we will ob-
serve his directions, and bee carefull to
use what he prescribes ; yet we must use
the meanes as meanes, and not set them in
Gods room, for that is the way to blast
our hopes ; The way to have any thing
taken away and not blest, is to set our hearts
too much upon it. Too much griefe in
parting with any thing, shewes too much
trust in the enioying of it ; and therefore
he that uses the meanes in faith will al-
waies joyne prayer unto God, from whom

Cap. 2.
1 Pet. 4.

7.
It serveth
Gods pro-
vidence in
the use of
meanes.

Cap. 20.

1 Tim. 5. 5.

Gen. 22. 2.

Dan. 5. 23.

as every good thing comes, so likewise doth the blessing and successe thereof; where much indoeavour is and little seeking to God, it shewes there is little trust; the Widow that trusted in God, continued like, wife in prayers day and night.

The best discovery of our not relying too much on meanes, is, when all meanes faile, if we can still rely upon God, as being still where he was, and hath waies of his owne for helping of us, either immediately from *himselfe*, or by setting a worke *other* meanes (and those perhaps very *unlikely*) such as wee thinke not of. God hath waies of his *owne*. Abraham never honoured God more, than when he trusted in God for a son against the course of nature, and when he had a son, was ready to sacrifice him, upon confidence that God would raise him from the dead againe. This was the ground upon which Daniel with such great authority reproved Balshazar that he had not a care to glorifie God, in whose hand *his breath was*, and all his waies. The greatest honour we can doe unto God, is when we see *nothing*, but rather all contrary to that we looke for, then to shut our eyes to inferiour

inferiour things below, and looke altogether upon his *Al-sufficiency*; God can convey himselfe more comfortably to us when he pleaseth *without* meanes than *by* meanes. True *trust* as it sets God highest in the soule, so in *danger* and *wants*, it hath present recourse to him, as the *Comets* to the *Rockes*.

Pro. 30. 26

8.

It runne
not before
God.

And because Gods times and seasons are the best, it is an evidence of true *trust* when we can waite Gods leisure, and not make haste and so runne before God; for else the *more* haste the *worse* speed; God seldome makes any promise to his Children, but he exerciseth their trust in *waiting* long before, as *David* for a *Kingdome*, *Abraham* for a *sonne*, the *whole world* for *Christs comming*, &c.

9.

It stils and
quiets the
soule upon
good
grounds.

One maine evidence of true *trust* in God is *here in the text*, wee see here it hath a *quieting* and *stilling* virtue, for it stayes the soul upon the fulnesse of Gods *love* joyned with his ability to supply our wants and relieve our necessities, though faith doth not (at the first especially) so stay the soule, as to take away all suspicious feares of the contrary: There be so many things in trouble that presse upon the

Cap. 10.

the soule, as hinder the joyning of God and it together, yet the prevailing of our unbelieve is taken away the reigne of it is broken. If the touch of Christ in his abasement on earth drew virtue from him, certaine it is that *faith* cannot touch Christ in heaven, but it will draw a quieting and sanctified virtue from him, which will in some measure stop the issues of an unquiet spirit; the Needle in the Compasse will stand North, though with some trembling.

A Ship that lyes at Anchor may bee something tossed, but yet it still remains so fastned, that it cannot be carried away by winde or weather; the soule after it hath cast anchor upon God, may (as we see here in *David*) be disquieted a while, but this unsetling tends to a deeper settling; the more wee beleewe, the more we are *established*; *faith* is an establishing grace, by *faith* we stand, and stand fast, and are able to withstand whatsoever opposeth us. For what can stand against God, upon whose truth and power *faith* relies? The devill feares not us, but him whom we flie unto for succour; It is the ground we stand on secures us, not our selves.

As

As it is our happinesse, so it must bee our indeavour to bring the soule close to God, that nothing get betweene, for then the soule hath no sure footing. When we step from God, Satan steps in by some temptation or other presently. It requires a great deale of *self-deniall*, to bring a soul either swelling with *carnal confidence*, or sinking by feare and *distrust*, to lie leuell upon God, and cleave fast to him: Square will lie fast upon Square, but our hearts are so full of unevennesse, that God hath much adoe to square our hearts fit for him, notwithstanding the soule hath no rest without this.

The use of *trust* is best knowne in the worst times, for naturally in sicknesse we trust to the Physitian, in want to our wit and shifts, in danger to policy and the arme of flesh, in plenty to our present supply, &c. but when we have nothing in view, then indeed should God bee *God* unto us. In times of distresse, when hee shewes himselfe in the waies of his mercy and goodnesse, then wee should especially magnifie his name, which will move him to discover his excellencies the more. the more we take notice of them. And therefore

Cap. 21.

fore *David* strengthens himselfe in these words that hee hoped for better times, wherein God would shew himselfe more gracious to him, because hee resolved to praise him.

This trusting joynts the soule againe, and sets it in its owne true resting place, and sets God in his owne place in the soule, that is, the highest; and the creature in its place, which is to be under God, as in its owne nature, so in our hearts.

Psal. 29.2.

This is to ascribe *honour due unto God*, the onely way to bring peace into the soule: Thus if we can bring our hope and trust to the God of hope and trust, we shall stand impregnable in all assaults, as will best appeare in these particulars.

CAP. XXI.

*Of quieting the spirit in troubles for sinne.
And objections answered.*

TO begin with troubles of the spirit, which indeed are the spirit of troubles, as disabling that which should uphold a man in all his troubles. A spirit set in tune, and assisted by a higher spirit, will

The Soules Conflict.

13 13

Cap. 11.

will stand out against ordinary assaults, but when God (the God of the spirits of all flesh) shall seem contrary to our spirits, whence then shall we finde reliefe?

Here all is spirituall, God a *Spirit*, the soule a *spirit*, the terrours *spirituall*, the devill who joynes with these a *spirit*; yea, that which the soule feares for the time to come, is *spirituall*, and not onely spirituall, but *eternall*, unlesse it pleaseth God at length to break out of the thick cloud, wherewith he covers himselfe, and shine upon the soule, as in his owne time hee will.

In this estate, comforts themselves are uncomfortable to the soule; it quarrels with every thing, the better things it heares of, the more it is vexed. Oh what is this to me, what have I to doe with these comforts? the more happinesse may be had, the more is my griefe; As for comforts from Gods inferiour blessings, as *friends, children, estate, &c.* the soule is ready to misconstrue Gods end in all, as not intending any good to him thereby.

In this condition God doth not appeare in his owne shape to the soule, but
in

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in the shape of an enemy; and when God seemes against us, who shall stand for us? Our blessed Saviour in his agony had the *Angels* to comfort him; but had he been a meere man, and not assisted by the God-head, it was not the comfort (no not) of *Angels* that could have upheld him, in the sense of his Fathers withdrawing his countenance from him. Alas then what will become of us in such a case, if we be not supported by a *spirit of power* and the power of an almighty Spirit?

If all the temptations of the whole world, and hell it selfe were mustered together, they were nothing to this, whereby the great God sets himselfe contrary to his poore creature. None can conceive so, but those that have felt it. If the hiding of his face will so trouble the soule, what will his frowne and angry looke doe? Needs must the soule be in a wofull plight, when as God seemes not onely to be absent from it, but an enemy to it. When a man sees no comfort from above, and looks inward and sees lesse, when he looks about him, and sees nothing but evidences of Gods displeasure, beneath him, and sees nothing but despe-

ration.

*Nihil est
tentatio vel
universi
mundi et
totius in-
ferni in unum
constata ad
eā qua Deus
contrarius
homini poni-
tur. Luther*

ration; clouds without, and clouds within, nothing but clouds in his condition; here he had need of faith to break through all, and see Sunne through the thickest cloud.

Upon this, the distressed soule is in danger to be set upon a *temptation*, called the temptation of *blasphemy*, that is, to entertain bitter thoughts against God, and especially against the grace and goodness of God, wherein he desires to make himselfe most knowne to his creature. In those that have wilfully resisted divine truths made knowne unto them, and after taste, despised them, a perswasion that God hath forsaken them, set on strongly by Satan, hath a worse effect, it stirs up a hellish hatred against God, carrying them to a revengefull desire of opposing whatsoever is Gods, though not alwayes openly (for then they should lose the advantage of doing hurt,) yet secretly and subtilly, and under pretence of the contrary. To this degree of *blasphemy* Gods children never fall, yet they may feel the venome of corruption stirring in their hearts, against God and his wayes which hee takes with them; and this addes greatly

*Tentatio
blasphemiarum.*

Cap. 11.

greatly to the depth of their affliction, when afterward they thinke with themselves what hellish stufte they carry in their soules. This is not so much discerned in the temptation, but after the fit is somewhat remitted.

In this kinde of desertion, seconded with this kinde of temptation, the way is to call home the soule, and to check it, and charge it to trust in God, even though he shewes himselfe an enemy, for it is but a *shew*, he doth but put on a maske with a purpose to reveale himselfe the more graciously afterward; his manner is to worke by contraries. In this condition God lets in some few beams of light, whereby the soul casts a longing look upon God, even when he seems to forsake it; it will with *Jonas* in the belly of hell, looke back to the holy Temple of God, it will steale a looke unto Christ. Nothing more comfortable in this condition, than to fly to him, that by experience knew what this kinde of forsaking meant, for this very end that hee might be the fitter to succour us in the like distresse,

Jon. 2. 4.

Learne therefore to appeale from God to God, oppose his gracious nature, his
sweet

sweet promises to such as are in dark-
nesse, and see no light, inviting them to
trust in him, though there appeare to
the eye of sense and reason nothing but
darknesse: Here make use of that sweet
Relation of God in Christ, becomming
a Father to us: *Doubtlesse thou art our
Father*: flesh would make a doubt of it,
and thou seemest to hide thy face from
us, yet *doubtlesse thou art our Father*, and
hast in former time shewed thy selfe to
be so, we will not leave thee till we have
a blessing from thee, till we have a kinder
looke from thee: This *wrastring* will
prevaile at length, and we shall have such
a sight of him, as shall be an encourage-
ment for the time to come, when *we shal
be able to comfort others, with those com-
forts whereby we have been refreshed our
selves*. With the Saints case remember
the Saints course, which is *to trust in God*.
So Christ the Head of the Church com-
mits himselfe to that God, whose favour
for the present he felt not; So *Job*
resolves upon *trust* though God should
kill him.

*But these holy persons were not troubled
with the guilt of any particular sinne, but*

T

feel

Cap. 21.
Ilay. 50. 10

Esa. 63. 16.

2 Cor. 1. 4.

Answe:

Cap. 21.

feel the just displeasure of God kindled against mee for many and great offences.

Answ.

True it is, that sinne is not so sweet in the committing, as it is heavy and bitter in the reckoning. When *Adam* had once offended God, *Paradise* it selfe was not *Paradise* to him. The presence of God which was most comfortable before, was now his greatest terrour, had not God out of his free infinite and preventing mercy come betwixt him and hell, by the promise of the blessed seed. This seed was *made sinne* to satisfie for sin; sin *passive* in him selfe to satisfie for sin *active* in us.

1 Cor. 5. 21

When God once charges sinne upon the soule, Alas who shall take it off? When the great God shall frowne, the smiles of the creature cannot refresh us. Sin makes us afraid of that which should be our greatest comfort; it puts a sting into every other evill, upon the seizing of any evill, either of body, soule, or condition, the guilty soule is imbittered and enraged; for from that which it feelles, it fore-speakes to it selfe worse to come. It interprets all that befalls, as the messengers of an angry God, sent in displeasure

to

to take revenge upon it. This weakeneth the courage, wasteth the spirits, and blasteth the beauty even of Gods dearest ones. There is not the stoutest man breathing, but if God sets his conscience against him, it will pull him downe, and lay him flat, and fill him with such inward terrors, as he shall bee more afraid of himselfe, than of all the world beside. This were a dolefull case, if God had not provided in Christ a remedy for this great evill of evils, and if the holy Spirit were not above the conscience, able as well to pacifie it by the sense of Gods love in Christ, as to convince it of sinne, and the just desert thereby.

But my sins are not the sins of an ordinary man, my spots are not as the spots of the rest of Gods children.

Object.

Conceive of Gods mercy as no ordinary mercy, and Christs obedience as no ordinary obedience. There is something in the very greatnesse of sin, that may encourage us to goe to God, for the greater our sinnes are, the greater the glory of his powerfull mercy in pardoning, and his powerfull grace in healing will appear. The great God delights to shew his

Answer.

Cap. 21.

Mic. 7. 18.

Psal. 51.

his greatnesse in the greatest things ;
 Even men glory, when they are put upon
 that, which may set forth their worth in
 any kinde. *GOD delighteth in mercy, it
 pleaseth him* (nothing so well), as being
 his chiefe *Name*, which then we take in
vaine, when we are not moved by it to
 come unto him.

That which Satan would use as an
 argument to drive us from God, wee
 should use as a strong plea with him.
 Lord, the greater my sins are, the greater
 will be the glory of thy pardoning mer-
 cy. *David* after his hainous finnes, cries
 not for *mercy*, but for *abundance* of mercy,
*according to the multitude of thy mercies,
 doe away mine offences*: his mercy is not
 onely above his *owne* workes, but above
 ours too. If we could sinne more than
 hee could pardon, then we might have
 some reason to despaire. Despaire is a
 high point of *Atheisme*, it takes away
 God and Christ both at once. *Judas* in
 betraying our Saviour, was an occasion
 of his death as *man*, but in despairing he
 did what lay in him to take away his life
 as *God*.

When therefore *Conscience* joyning
 with

with Satan, sets out thy sinne in its colours, labour thou by faith to set out God in his colours, infinite in mercy and loving kindenesse. Here lies the art of a Christian; It is divine Rhetorick thus to perswade and set downe the soule. Thy sins are great, but *Adams* was greater, who being so newly advanced above all the creatures, and taken into so neare an acquaintance with God, and having ability to persist in that condition if hee would, yet willingly overthrew himselfe and all his whole posterity, by yeelding to a temptation, which though high (as being promised to be like unto God,) yet such as he should and might have resisted; No sinne we can commit, can be a sinne of so tainting and spreading a nature, yet as he fell by *distrust*, so he was recovered by *trusting*, and so must we by relying on a second *Adam*, whose obedience and righteousness *from thence* reignes, to the taking away not onely of that one sinne of *Adam*, and ours in him, but of all, and not onely to the pardon of all sinne, but to a right of everlasting life. The Lord thinks himselfe disparaged, when wee have no higher thoughts of *his* mercy,

Y 3

than

Rom. 5. 17

Gods mercy not to be limited.

Cap. 21.

May. 55. 9.

than of our sins, when we bring God down to our Model, when as, *the heavens are not so much higher than the earth, than his thoughts of love and goodnesse, are above the thoughts of our unworthinesse.* It is a kinde of taking away the Almighty, to limit his boundlesse mercy in Christ, within the narrow scantling of our apprehension; yet *infidelity* doth this, which should stirre up in us a loathing of it above all other finnes. But this is Satans fetch, when once he hath brought us into finnes against the Law, then to bring us into finnes of a higher nature, and deeper danger, even against the blessed Gospel, that so there may be no remedy, but that mercy it selfe might condemne us.

All the aggravations, that conscience and Satan helping it, are able to raise sin unto, cannot rise to that degree of infinitenesse, that Gods mercy in Christ is of. If there be a spring of sinne in us, there is a spring of mercy in him, and a fountaine opened daily to wash our selves in. If we sin oft, let us doe as S. Paul, who prayed oft against the prick of the flesh. If it be a devill of long continuance, yet

Zac. 13. 1.

yet fasting and prayer will drive him out at length.

Nothing keeps the soule more downe, than sinnes of long continuance, because corruption of nature hath gotten such strength in them, as *nature* is added to *nature*, and custome doth so determine and sway the soule one way, that men think it impossible to recover themselves, they see one linke of sin draw on another, al making a chain to fasten them to destruction, they thinke of necessity they must be damned, because custome hath bred a necessity of sinning in them, and conceive of the promise of mercy, as only made to such as turne from their sinfull courses, in which they see themselves so hardened, that they cannot repent.

Certaine it is, the condition is most lamentable, that yeelding unto sinne brings men unto. Men are carefull to prevent dangerous sicknesses of *body*, and the danger of law concerning their *estates*; but seldome consider into what a miserable plight their sinnes which they so willingly give themselves up unto, will bring them. If they doe not perish in their sins, yet their yeelding will bring

Sinnes of continuance dangerous.

Cap. 22.

them into such a dolefull condition, that they would give the whole world, if they were possessours of it, to have their spirits at freedome from this bondage and feare.

To such as blesse themselves in an ill way upon hope of mercy, wee dare not speake a word of comfort, because God doth not, but threatens, his wrath shall burne to hell against them. Yet because while life continues there may bee as a *space*, so a *place*, and *grace* for repentance, these must be dealt withall in such a manner, as they may be stayed and stopped in their dangerous courses, there must be a stop before a turne.

And when their consciences are thoroughly awaked with sense of their danger, let them seriously consider whither sin, and Satan by sin is carrying of them, and lay to heart the justice of God, standing before them as an Angell with a drawne sword, ready to fall upon them if they post on still.

Yet to keepe them from utter sinking, let them consider withall, the unlimited mercy of God, as not limited to any person, or any sinne, so not to any time; there

is

How to
deale with
such, as
have lived
long in
sinne.

is no prescription of time can binde God, his mercy hath no certaine date that will expire, so as those that fly unto it, shall have no benefit. Invincible mercy will never be conquered, and endlesse goodnesse never admits of bounds or end.

Bonitas invicta non vincitur, & infinita misericordia non finitur.
Fulgent.

What kinde of people were those that followed Christ? were they not such as had lived long in their sinfull courses? He did not onely raise them that were newly dead, but *Lazarus* that had lyen *four dayes in the grave*. They thought Christs power in raising the dead, had reached to a short time onely, but hee would let them know, that he could as well raise those that had been *long* as lately dead. If Christ be the Physitian, it is no matter of how long continuance the disease be. He is good at all kinde of diseases, and will not endure the reproach of disability to cure any. Some diseases are the reproaches of other Physitians, as being above their skill to helpe, but no conceit more dangerous when we are to deale with Christ.

“ The blessed Martyr *Bilney* was much
“ offended when hee heard an eloquent
“ Preacher inveighing against sinne, say-
“ ing

Cap. 21.

“ing thus, Behold, thou hast lyen rotten
 “in thy owne lusts, by the space of six-
 “ty yeares, even as a beast in his owne
 “dung, and wilt thou presume in one
 “yeare to goe forward towards heaven,
 “and that in thine old age, as much as
 “thou wentest backward from heaven to
 “hell in sixty yeares? Is not this a good-
 “ly argument (saith *Bilney*?) Is this
 “preaching of repentance in the name of
 “Jesus? It is as if Christ had dyed in
 “vaine for such a man, and that he must
 “make satisfaction for himselfe. If I
 “had heard (saith he) such preaching of
 “repentance in times past, I had utterly
 “despaired of mercy: We must never
 think the doore of hope to bee shut a-
 gainst us, if we have a purpose to turne
 unto God. As there is nothing more in-
 jurious to Christ, so nothing more foolish
 and groundlesse than to distrust, it being
 the chiefe scope of God in his word to
 draw our trust to him in Christ, in whom
 is alwayes open a breast of mercy for
 humbled sinners to fly unto.

But thus far the consideration of our
 long time spent in the devils service should
 prevaile with us, as to take more shame

to

to our selves, so to resolve more strongly for God and his wayes, and to account it more then sufficient that we have spent already, so much precious time to so ill purposes; and the lesse time wee have to make the more haste, to worke for God, and bring all the honour we can to Religion in so little a space. Oh how doth it grieve those that have felt the gracious power of Christ in converting their soules, that ever they should spend the strength of their parts in the worke of his and their enemy! And might they live longer, it is their full purpose for ever to renounce their former waies. There is bred in them an eternall desire of pleasing God, as in the wicked there is an eternall desire of offending him, which eternity of desires God looks to in both of them, and rewards them accordingly, though he cuts off the thred of their lives.

But God in wisdom will have the conversions of such as have gone on in a course of sinning (especially after light revealed) to be rare and difficult. Birthes in those that are ancients, are with greater danger than in the younger sort. God will take a course, that his grace shall not be

*Cavendum
est vulnus,
quod dolore
curatur.*

Cap. 21.

be turned into wantonnesse. He oft holds such upon the rack of a troubled conscience, that they and others may feare to buy the pleasure of sinne at such a rate. Indeed where *sinne* abounds, there *grace* superabounds, but then it is where sinne that abounded in the *life* abounds in the *conscience* in griefe and derestation of it, as the greatest evill. Christ groaned at the raising of *Lazarus*, which he did not at others, because that though to an Almighty power all things are alike easie, yet he will shew that there be degrees of difficulties in the things themselves, and make it appeare to us that it is so. Therefore those that have enjoyed long the sweet of sinne, may expect the bitterest sorrow and repentance for sinne.

Yet never give place to thoughts of *despaire*, as comming from him that would overturne the end of the Gospel, which layes open the riches of Gods mercy in Christ, which riches none set out more than those that have been *the greatest of sinners*, as we see in *Paul*. We cannot exalt God more than by taking notice, and making use of that great designe of infinite wisdom in reconciling justice

justice and mercy together, so as now he is not onely mercifull, but *just in pardoning sinnes*. Our Saviour as he came towards the latter age of the world, when all things seemed desperate; so he comes to some men in the latter part of their dayes. The mercy shewed to *Zacheus*, and the *good theefe* was personall, but the comfort intended by Christ was publick, therefore *still trust in God*.

In this case we must goe to God, with whom all things are possible, to put forth his Almighty power, not onely in the pardoning, but in subduing our iniquities. He that can make a *Camell* goe through a *needles eye*, can make a high conceited man lowly, a rich man humble. Therefore never question his power, much lesse his willingnesse, when hee is not onely ready to receive us when we returne, but perswades and intreats us to come in unto him, yea after *back-sliding* and false dealing with him, wherein he allowes no mercy to be shewed by man, yet he will take liberty to shew mercy himselfe.

But I have often relapsed and fallen into the same sin againe.

If Christ will have us pardon our brother

Cap. 21.

Rom. 3. 26

Jer. 3. 2.

Object.

Ans.

Cap. 21.

Isay. 55.1.

brother seaventy seaven times, can wee thinke that he will enioyne us more, then he will be ready to doe himselfe, when in case of shewing mercy he would have us thinke his thoughts to be farre above ours? *Adam* lost all by once sinning; but we are under a better covenant, a covenant of mercy, and are encouraged by the Sonne to goe to the Father every day for the finnes of that day.

Where the worke of grace is begun, sinne loses strength by every new fall; for hence issues deeper humility, stronger hatred, fresh indignation against our selves, more experience of the deceitfulness of our hearts, renewed resolutions untill sin be brought under. That should not drive us from God, which God would have us make use of, to fly the rather to him, since there is a throne of grace set up in *Jesus Christ* we may boldly make use of, and let us be ashamed to sinne, and not bee ashamed to glorifie Gods mercy in begging pardon for sin. Nothing will make us more ashamed to sin, then thoughts of so free and large mercy. It wil grieve an ingenuous spirit to offend so good a God. Ah that there should bee
such

such an heart in me, as to tire the patience of God, and damme up his goodnesse, as much as in me lyes ! but this is our comfort, that the plea of mercy from a broken spirit to a gracious Father, will ever hold good. When wee are at the lowest in this world, yet there are these three grounds of comfort still remaining.

1. That we are not yet in the place of the damned, whose estate is unalterable.
2. That whilest we live there is time and space for recovering of our selves.
3. That there is grace offered, if we will not shut our hearts against it.

O, but every one hath his time, my good houre may be past.

Object.

Ans.

That is counsell to thee, it is not past if thou canst raise up thy heart to God, and imbrace his goodnesse. Shew by thy yeelding unto mercy, that thy time of mercy is not yet out, rather than by concluding uncomfortably, willingly betray thy selfe to thy greatest enemy, enforcing that upon thy selfe, which God labours to draw thee from. As in the sinne against the Holy Ghost, *fear* shewes that we have not committed it : So in this, a tender heart fearing lest our time be past, shewes

Cap. 22.

shewes plainly that it is not past.

Luke 15.

Looke upon examples, when the Prodigall in his forlorne condition was going to his Father, his *Father* stayed not for him, but *meets him* in the way, he did not onely goe, but *ranne* to meet him. God is more willing to entertaine us, than we are to cast our selves upon him: As there is a *fountaine opened for sinne, and for uncleannesse*, so it is a *living fountaine of living water*, that runnes for ever, and can never be drawne dry.

Caution

Here remember, that I build not a shelter for the presumptuous, but onely open an harbour for the truly humbled soule, to put himselfe into.

CAP. XXII.

Of sorrow for sin, and hatred of sinne, when right and sufficient. Helps thereto.

Object.

AH! *there's my misery. If I could be humbled for sin, I might hope for mercy, but I never yet knew what a broken heart meant, this soul of mine was never as yet sensible of the griefe and smart of sin, how then can I expect any comfort?*

It

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 22.

Ans.

I.

Sorrow not
required
for it selfe
as sorrow.

It is one of Satans policies, to hold us in a dead and barren condition, by following us with conceits, that wee have not sorrowed in proportion to our offences. True it is, we should labour that our sorrow might in some measure answer to the haynoullesse of our sinnes: but we must know sorrow is not required for it selfe in that degree as *saith* is: If wee could trust in God without much sorrow for our sins, then it would not be required, for God delights not in our sorrow as sorrow, God in mercy both requires it and workes it, as thereby making us capable vessels of mercy, fit to acknowledge, value, and walke worthy of Christ, he requires it as it is a meanes to iambitter sinne, and the delightfull pleasures thereof unto us, and by that meanes bring us to a right judgement of our selves, and the creature, with which sinne commits spirituall adultery, that so we may recover our taste before lost. And then, when with the Prodigall we returne unto our selves (having lost our selves before) we are fit to judge of the basenesse of sinne and of the worth of mercy, and so up on grounds of right reason, be willing to

Z

alter

Cap. 32.

alter our condition, and imbrace mercy upon any terms it shall please Christ to injoyne.

Ans. 2.

The greatest sorrow can make no satisfaction for sinne.

Secondly, if we could grieve and cast down our selves beneath the earth, as low as the nethermost pit, yet this would be no satisfaction to God for sin; of it selfe, it is rather an enterance, and beginning of hell.

Ans. 3.

NOTICE

Thirdly, we must search what is the cause of this want of griefe which wee complaine of; whether it be not a secret cleaving to the creature, and too much contentment in it, which oft stealeth away the heart from God, and brings in such contentment, as is subject to faile and deceive us, whereupon from discontentment, we grieve, which griefe (being carnall) hinders griefe of a better kinde.

Causes of our want of griefe for sinne.

I.

Want of consideration.

Use of crosses.

Usually the causes of our want of griefe for sin are these. First, a want of serious consideration, and dwelling long enough upon the cause of griefe, which springs either from an unsettlednesse of nature, or distractions from things without. Moveable dispositions are not long affected with any thing. One maine use of crosses, is to take off the soule from that

that it is dangerously set upon, and to fixe our running spirits. For though grief for crosses hinder spirituall griefe, yet worldly delights hinder more. That grief is lesse distant from true griefe, and therefore nearer to be turned into it.

And put case wee could call off our mindes from other things, and set them on grief for our sins, yet it is onely Gods Spirit that can work our hearts to this griefe; and for this end, perhaps God holds us off from it, to teach us, that he is the teacher of the heart to griefe. And thereupon it is our duty to waite, till he reveale our selves so far to our selves, as to stir up this affection in us.

Another cause may bee a kinde of doublenesse of heart, whereby we would bring two things together that cannot suite. We would grieve for sin so far as we thinke it an evidence of a good condition: but then, because it is an irksome task, and because it cannot be wrought without severing our heart from those sweet delights it is set upon: hence we are loath God should take that course to worke griefe, which crosseth our disposition. The soule must therefore by self-

Z x deniall

2.

Want of a
divine
worke.

3.

A kind of
doublenes
of heart.

Cap 22.
Self denial

2 Cor. 7. 10

deniall be brought to such a degree of *sincerity* and *simplicity*, as to be willing to give God leave to worke *this sorrow*, *not to be sorrowed for*, by what way he himself pleaseth. But here we must remember againe, that this *selfe-deniall*, is not of our selves, but of God, who onely can take us out of our selves, and if our hearts were brought to a stooping herein to his work, it would stop many a crosse, and continue many a blessing which God is forced to take from us, that he may worke that grieve in us which hee seeth would not otherwise be kindly wrought.

4.

God giveth some larger spirits, and so their sorrowes become larger. Some upon quicknesse of apprehension, and the ready passages betwixt the braine and the heart, are quickly moved: where the apprehension is deeper, and the passages slower, there sorrow is long in working, and long in removing. The deepest waters have the stillest motion. Iron takes fire more slowly than stubble, but then it holds it longer.

5.

Because
God sees
no: grieve
so fit for
one dispo-
sition as
another.

Again, *God that searcheth and knowes our hearts* (better than our selves) *knowes when and in what measure it is fit for to grieve:*

grieve : He sees it fitter for some dispositions; to goe on in a constant griefe. We must give that honour to the wisdom of the great Physitian of soules, to know best how to mingle and minister his potions. And we must not be so unkind to take it ill at Gods hands, when he (out of gentlenesse and forbearance) ministers not to us that churlish Physick he doth to others, but cheerfully embrace any potion that hee thinkes fit to give us.

Some holy men have desired to see their sin in the most ugly colours, and God hath heard them in their requests. But yet his hand was so heavy upon them, that they went always mourning to their very graves, and thought it fitter to leave it to Gods wisdom to mingle the potion of sorrow, than to be their own choosers. For a conclusion then of this point, If we grieve that we cannot grieve, and so far as it is sinne, make it our griefe: then put it amongst the rest of our sins, which we beg pardon of, and helpe against, and let it not hinder us from going to Christ, but drive us to him. For, herein lyes the danger of this temptation, that those who

Earnest
desire of
too much
sorrow for
sin dangerous.

M. Leaver.

Esp. 28.

complaine in this kinde, thinke it should be presumption to goe to Christ: when as he especially calleth the weary and heavy laden sinner to come unto him, and therefore such as are sensible that they are not sensible enough of their sin, must know, though want of feeling be quite opposite to the life of Grace: yet sensiblenesse of the want of feeling, shewes some degree of the life of Grace. The safest way in this case is, from that life and light that God hath wrought in our soules, to see and feel this want of feeling, to cast our selves and this our indisposition, upon the pardoning and healing mercy of God in Christ.

Caution.

We speake onely of those that are so far displeased with themselves for their ill temper, as they doe not faviour themselves in it, but are willing to yeeld to Gods way in redressing it, and doe not crosse the Spirit, moving them thus with David to check themselves, and to trust in God. Otherwise, an unfeeling and carelesse state of Spirit will breed a secret shame of going to God, for removing of that we are not hearty in labouring against so far as our conscience tels us we are enabled.

The

The most constant state the soule can be in, in regard of sinne, is, upon judgement to condemne it upon right grounds, and to resolve against it. Whereupon *Repentance* is called *an after wisdom and change of the mind*. And this disposition is in Gods children at all times. And for *affections*, love of that which is *good*, and *hatred* of that which is *evil*; these likewise have a settled continuance in the soule. But, *griefe* and *sorrow* rise and fall as fresh occasions are offered, and are more lively stirred up upon some lively representation to the soule of some hurt we receive by sin, and wrong we doe to God in it. The reason hereof is, because till the soule be separated from the body, these affections have more communion with the body, and therefore they carry more outward expressions, than dislike, or abomination in the mind doth. Wee are to judge of our selves more by that which is constant, then by that which is ebbing and flowing.

But, what is the reason that the affections doe not alwayes follow the judgement, and the choice or refusall of the will?

Our soule being a finite substance, is

Cap. 22.
The most constant state of the soule in regard of sin.

Quest.

Ans.
I.

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Item 317

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Cap. 22.
When the
soule is
sufficiently
humbled.

walks in a contrary way: for this answers Gods end in griefe, one of which, is a prevention from falling for the time to come. For God hath that affection in him which he puts into Parents, which is by smart to prevent their childrens boldnesse of offending for the time to come.

2.

2. When that which is wanting in grief, is made up in feare. Here there is no great cause of complaint of the want of grief, for this holy affection is the awband of the soul, whereby it is kept from starting from God and his wayes.

Fear is the
awband
of the soul.

3.

3. When after griefe we find inward peace: for true griefe being Gods work in us, he knowes best how to measure it. Therefore, whatsoever frame God brings my soule into, I am to rest in his goodnesse, and not except against his dealing. That peace and joy, which riseth from griefe in the use of meanes, and makes the soule more humble and thankfull to God, and lesse censorious and more pitifull to others: is no illusion, nor false light.

4.

The maine end of griefe and sorrow is, to make us value the grace and mercy of God in Christ, above all the contentments which
sin

Cap. 22.

sin seeds on. Which where it is found, we may know that griefe for sinne, hath enough possessed the soule before. The sufficiency of things is to be judged by an answerablenesse to their use and ends: God makes sin bitter, that Christ may be sweet: *that measure of griefe and sorrow is sufficient, which brings us, and holds us to Christ.*

5. *Hatred*, being the strongest, deepest, and steadiest affection of the soul against that which is evill; Griefe for sin is then right, when it springs from hatred, and encreaseth further hatred against it.

How to
know that
we hate sin
rightly.

1.

Now the soule may be knowne to hate sin, when it seekes the utter abolishing of it, for hatred is an implacable, and irreconcilable affection.

2.

True *hatred* is carried against the whole kinde of sin, without respect of any wrong done to us, but only out of a meer meere *Antipathie*, and contrariety of disposition to it. As the Lambe hateth the whole kinde of Wolves, and man hateth the whole kinde of Serpents. A Toad does us no harme, but yet we hate it.

3.

That which is hatefull to us, the nearer it is, the more we shun and abhorre it, as

venemous

venemous Serpents, and hurtfull creatures, because the neerenesse of the object affects us more deeply. Therefore, if our grieſe spring from true hatred of ſin, it will make no new league with it, but grieve for all ſin, eſpecially for our own particular ſinnes, as being contrary to the worke of Gods grace in us, *then is grieſe* an affection of the new creature, and every way of the right breed.

But for fuller ſatisfaction in this caſe, we muſt know *there is ſometimes grieſe for ſin in us, when we thinke there is none*; it wants but ſtirring up by ſome quickning word; the remembrance of Gods favours and our unkindneſſe, or the awaking of our conſciences by ſome croſſe, will raiſe up this affection feelingly in us. As in the affection of love many thinke that they have no love to God at all: yet let God be diſhonoured in his *name, truth, or children*, and their love will ſoone ſtir and appeare in juſt anger.

In want of grieſe for ſinne, we muſt remember, 1. *That we muſt have this affection from God, before we can bring it unto God.*

And therefore, in the ſecond place,
Our

4.

What wee muſt doe in want of grieſe for ſinne.

I.

2.

Cap. 22.

Isay 63.

Our chiefe care should be not to harden our hearts against the motions of the Spirit, stirring us to seasonable griefe, for that may cause a *judiciall hardnesse* from God. God oft inflicteth some spirituall judgement (as a correction upon men) for not yeelding to his Spirit at the first, they feel a hardnesse of heart growing upon them : This made the Church complaine, *Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy feare ?* Which if Christians did well consider, they would more carefully entertain such impressions of sorrow, as the Spirit in the use of the meanes, and observation of Gods dealing towards themselves or others, shall worke in them, then they doe. It is a saying of *Austen*, *Let a man grieve for his sin, and joy for his griefe.* Though we can neither *love*, nor *grieve*, nor *joy* of our selves, as we should, yet our hearts tel us, we are are often guilty of giving a check to the *Spirits* stirring these affections in us, which is a maine cause of the many sharp afflictions we endure in this life, though Gods love in the main matter of salvation be most firme unto us.

3.

We must not think to have all this
griefe

griefe at first, and at once, for oftentimes it is deeper after a sight and feeling of Gods love then it was before. God is a free Agent, and knows every mans severall mould, and the severall services he is to use them in, and oft takes liberty afterwards to humble men more (when he hath inabled them better to beare it) then in their first entrance into Religion: Griefe before springs commonly from self-love, and feare of danger. Let no man suspect his estate because God spares him in the beginning. For Christians many times meet with greater tryalls after their conversion than ever they thought on. *When men take litle fines, they meane to take the greater rent.* God will have his children first or last to feel what sin is; and how much they are beholding to him for Christ.

This griefe doth not alwaies arise from poring on sinne, but by oft considering of the infinite goodnesse of God in Christ, and thereby reflecting on our owne unworthinesse, not onely in regard of sin past, but likewise of the sin that hangeth upon us, and issues daily from us. The more holy a man is, the more he sees the holinesse

Csp. 22.

Al a Christians grief is not at first.

Griefe arises not alwaies from our poring on sinne.

Cap. 22.

ness of Gods nature, with whom he desires to have communion, the more he is grieved that there should bee any thing found in him, displeasing to so pure a Majesty.

And as all our griefe comes not at first, so God will not have it come all at once, but to be a streame alwayes running, fed with a spring, yet within the bankes, though sometimes deeper, sometimes shallower. Griefe for sin is like a constant streame; griefe for other things is like a torrent, or swelling waters, which rise soon up, soon down; what it wants in greatnesse, is made up in continuance.

4.
That there may be a
spice of
Popery in
this our
earnest de-
fire of
much
griefe

Againe, *If wee watch not our nature, there will be a spice of Popery* (which is a naturall Religion) *in this great desire of more griefe*: as if we had that, then we had something to satisfie God withall, and so, our mindes will runne too much upon workes. This griefe must not only be wrought by God revealing our sinne, and his mercy unto us in Christ: But when it is wrought, we must altogether rest (in a sense of our owne emptinesse) upon the full satisfaction and worthinesse of Christ our Saviour.

All

All this that hath been said, tends not to the abating of our desire to have a tender and bleeding heart for sin : but that in the pursuit of this desire, we be not cast down so as to question our estates, if we feel not that measure of griefe which we desire and endeavour after : Or, to refuse our portion of joy which God offers us in Christ. Considering, griefe is no further good, than it makes way for joy : which caused our Saviour to joyne them together : *Blessed are the mourners, for they shall be comforted.* Being thus disposed, we may commit our souls to God in peace, notwithstanding Satans troubling of us in the hour of temptation.

Cap. 23.
The scope
of this
discourse
of grief.

Mat. 5.

C A P. XXIII.

*Other spirituall causes of the soules trouble,
discovered, and removed : and objections
answered.*

ANother thing that disquiets and casts down the soul very much, is that inward conflict betwixt *grace* and *corruption* : this makes us most worke, and puts us to most disquietment. It is the trouble

of

That the
great con-
flict in us
betwixt
grace and
corruption
doth also
much cast
us downe.
*Proxima est
odia sunt
acerbissima.*

Cap. 23.

Rom. 7.

Rom. 7.

That the
fight and
sense of
this sharp
conflict,
should
cause us to
trust the
more in
God.

of troubles to have two inhabitants so neare in one soule, and these to strive one against another, in every action, and at all times in every part and power in us: the one carrying us upward, higher and higher still, till we come to God: the other pulling us lower and lower, further from him. *This cannot but breed a great disquiet, when a Christian shall be put on to that which he would not, and hindered from that which he would doe, or troubled in the performance of it.* The more light there is to discern, and life of Grace to be sensible hereof, and the more love of Christ, and desire from love to be like to him, the more irksome will this be: no wonder then that the Apostle cryed out, *O wretched man that I am, &c.*

Here is a speciall use of Trust, in the free mercy of God in *justification*, (considering all is stained that comes from us) it is one maine end of Gods leaving us in this conflicting condition, that we may live and die by faith in the perfect righteousness of Christ, whereby we glorifie God more, than if we had perfect righteousness of our own. Hereby likewise, we are driven to make use of all the promises

mises of Grace, and to trust in God for the performance of them, in strengthening his owne party in us, and not only to trust in God for particular graces, but for his Spirit which is the spring of all graces, which we have through and from Christ: who will helpe us in this fight, untill he hath made us like himselfe. We are under the government of Grace, sinne is deposed from the rule it had, and shall never recover the right it had again; *It is left in us for matter of exercise, and ground of triumph.*

Ob (say some) I shall never hold out, as good give over as first as at last, I find such strong inclinations to sinne in me, and such weaknesse to resist temptation, that I feare I shall but shame the cause; I shall one day perish by the hand of Satan, strengthening my corruption.

Object.
Of perseverance to the end, answered,

Answer.

Why art thou thus troubled? Trust in God, Grace will be above Nature, God above the devil, the Spirit above the flesh. Be strong in the Lord, the battell is his, and the victory ours before hand. If we fought in our own cause and strength, and with our weapons, it were something: but as we fight in the power of God, so

Cap. 13.

are we kept by that mighty power through faith unto salvation. It lyes upon the faithfulness of Christ, to put us into that possession of glory which he hath purchased for us: therefore charge the soule to make use of the promises, and rely upon God for perfecting the good worke that he hath begun in thee.

Corruptions be strong, but stronger is he that is in us, then that corruption that is in us. When we are weake in our own sense, then are we strong in *him*, who perfecteth strength in our weakenesse felt and acknowledged. Our corruptions are Gods enemies as well as ours, and therefore in trusting to *him*, and fighting against them, we may be sure he will take our part against them.

Object.

But I have great impediments, and many discouragements in my Christian course.

Answ.

Zach. 4. 7.

What if our impediments be *Mountaines*, faith is able to remove them; *Who art thou O Mountaine?* (saith the Prophet) What a world of impediments were there betwixt *Egypt* and the land of *Canaan*, betwixt the returne out of *Babylon* and *Jerusalem*? yet faith removed all, by looking to Gods power and truth in his promise.

Cap. 23.

Psal. 25.

Psal. 10.

Psal. 138.

Object.

Ans. w.

promise. The looking too much to the
Anakims and Gynns, and too little to
Gods omniporency, shut the Israelites
out of Canaan, and put God to his oath,
that they should never enter into his rest,
and it will exclude our souls from hap-
pinesse at length, if looking too much up-
on these Anakims within us and without
us, we basely despaire and give over the
field, considering all our enemies are not
only conquered for us by our Head, but
shall be conquered in us, so that in strength
of assistance we fight against them. God
gave the Israelites enemies into their
hands, but yet they must fight it out, and
what coward will not fight when hee is
sure of helpe and victory.

But I carry continually about me a corrupt
heart, if that were once changed, I would
have some comfort.

A new heart is Gods creature, and he
hath promised to create it in us. A crea-
ting power cannot only bring something
out of nothing, but contrary out of con-
trary. Where we are sure of Gods truth,
let us never question that power to which
all things are possible. If our hearts were
as ill, as God is powerfull and good,

Cap. 23.

there were some ground of discouragement. In what measure wee give up our hearts to God, in that measure we are sure to receive them better. That grace which enlargeth the heart to desire good, is therefore given, that God may increase it, being both a part and a pledge of further grace. There is a promise of pouring *clean water* upon us, which *faith* must sue out. Christ hath taken upon him to purge his *Spouse*, and make her fit for himselfe.

Ephes. 5.

Object.

But I have many wants and defects to be supplied.

Answ.

It pleaseth him, that in Christ *all fulnesse shall dwell*; from whose fulnesse grace sufficient is dispensed to us, answerable to the measure of our *faith*, whereby we fetch it from the fountaine. The more we *trust*, the more wee have. When we looke therefore to our owne want, we should look withall to Christs *fulnesse*, and his nearnesse to us, and take advantage from our misery, to rest upon his *al-sufficiency*, whose *fulnesse* is ours, as *himselfe*, is. Our *fulnesse* with our life is hid in Christ, and distilled into us, in such measure as his wisdometh

eth

eth fit, and as sheweth him to be a free agent, and yet so as the blame for want of grace lyeth upon us, seeing hee is before hand with us in his offers of grace, and our own consciences will tell us, that our failings are more from cherishing of some lust, then from unwillingnesse in him to supply us with grace.

But God is of pure eyes, and cannot endure such services as I performe.

Object.

Ans.

Though God be of pure eyes, yet hee lookes upon us in *him*, who is blamelesse and without spot, who by vertue of his sweet smelling sacrifice, appeares for us in heaven, and mingles his odors with our services, and in him will God bee known to us by the name of a kind Father; not onely in pardoning our defects, but accepting our endeavours. We offer our services to God, not in our own name, but in the name of our *high Priest*, who takes them from us, and presents them to his Father, as stirred up by his spirit, and perfumed by his obedience. *For* his prayer was mingled with a great deale of passion and imperfection, yet God could discern something of his *own* in it, and pity and pardon the rest.

Cap. 29.

CHAP. XXIV. of outward troubles disquieting the spirit: and comforts in them.

AS for the outward evils that we meet withall in this life, they are either such, 1. As deprive us of the comforts our nature is supported withall; or else, 2. they bring such misery upon our nature or condition that hinders our well-being in this world.

I.

For outward evils.

Amaziah.

For the first, Trust in God, and take out of his al-sufficiency whatsoever we want. Sure we are by his promise, that we shall want nothing that is good. What he takes away one way, hee can give another, what hee takes away in one hand, he can give another, what he with-holds one way, he can supply in a better. Whatsoever comfort we have in goods, friends, health, or any other blessings, it is al conveyed by him, who still remains, though these be taken from us. And we have him bound in many promises for all that is needfull for us. We may file him upon his own bond, Can we thinke that he who will give us a Kingdome, will faile

us in necessary provision to bring us thi-
ther, who himselfe is our portion?

As for those miseries which our weak
nature is subject to, they are all under
Christ, they come and goe at his com-
mand, they are his messengers sent for
our good, and called back againe when
they have done what they came for.
Therefore look not so much upon *them*,
as *to him* for strength and comfort
in them, mitigation of *them*, and grace to
profit by them.

To strengthen our faith the more in
God, he calleth himselfe, a *Buckler* for
defence from ill, and an *exceeding great*
reward for a supply of all good. A *sunne*
for the one, and a *shield* for the other.
Trust him then with health, wealth, good
name, all that thou hast. It is not in man
to take away that from us, which God
will give us, and keep for us. It is not in
mans power to make others conceive
what they please of us.

Among crosses, this is that which dis-
quieteth not the mind least, to bee de-
ceived in matter of *trust*, when as if wee
had not trusted, we had not been deceived.
The very feare of being disappointed,

Cap. 24.
Plat. 1. 6.

Joh. 6. 15.

Joh. 16. 32
Solomon est
oui Christus
comes est.
Cypr.

made *David* in his haste think *all men were lyers*. But as it is a sharp crosse, so nothing will drive us nearer unto God, who never faileth his.

Friends often prove as the *reed of Egypt*, as a *broken staffe*, and as a *deceitfull Brooke*, that failes the weary passenger in Summer time, when there is most need of refreshing; and it is the unhappiness of men otherwise happy in the world, that during their prosperous condition, they know not who be their friends, for when their condition declines, it plainly appeares, that many were friends of their *estates*, and not of their persons: But when men will know us least, God will know us most, he knowes our soules in *adversity*, and knowes them so, as to support and comfort them, and that from the spring-head of comfort, whereby the sweetest comforts are fetcht. What God conveyed before by friends, that he doth now instill immediately from himselfe. The immediate comforts are the strongest comforts. Our Saviour Christ told his Disciples, that they would *leave him alone*, yet (saith he) *I am not alone, but the Father is with me*. At S. Pauls first appealing

ling, all forsooke him, but the Lord stood by him. He wants no company that hath Christ for his companion. *I looked for some to take pity* (saith David) *but there was none.* This unfaithfulnesse of man, is a foile to set out Gods truth, who is never neerer than when trouble is neereest. There is not so much as a shadow of change in him or his love.

It is just with God, when we lay too much weight of confidence upon any creature, to let us have the greater fall. Man may faile us, and yet be a good man, but God cannot faile us and be God, because he is truth it selfe. Shall God be so true to us, and shall not we be true to him and his truth?

The like may be said in the departure of our friends. Our life is oft too much in the life of others, which God takes unkindely. How many friends have we in him alone? who rather than wee shall want friends, can make our enemies our friends. A true beleever is to Christ as his *Mother, Brother, and Sister*, because hee carries that affection to them, as if they were *Mother, Brother, and Sister* to him indeed. As Christ makes us all to him,

so

Cap. 24.
1 Tim. 17.

R. 62. 20.

Comfort
in depar-
ture of
friends.

Mat. 12. 50

Cap. 24.

V. 10. 7.

02. 02. 24

Comfort
in sickness.Meanes
not to be
relyed on.

so should we make him all in all to our selves. If all comforts in the world were dead, wee have them still in the living Lord.

Sicknesses are harbingers of death, and in the apprehension of many they be the greatest troubles, and tame great spirits, that nothing else could tame; herein we are more to deale with God than with men, which is one comfort sickness yeeldeth above other troubles. It is better to be troubled with the distempers of our own bodies, than with the distempers of other mens soules; In which we have not onely to deale with men, but with the devill himselfe, that ruleth in the humors of men.

The example of *Asa* teaches us in this case, not to lay too much trust upon the Physitian, but with *Hezekiah* first looke up to God, and then use the meanes. If God will give us *a quietus est*, and take us off from businesse by sickness, then wee have a time of serving God by patient subjection to his will. If he meanes to use our service any further, he will restore our health and strength to doe that worke he sets us about. Health is at his command,

and

and sicknesse stayes at his rebuke. In the meane, the time of sicknesse is a time of purging from that defilement we gathered in our health, till we come purer out, which should move us the rather willingly to abide Gods time. Blessed is that sicknesse that proves the health of the soule. We are best, for the most part, when we are weakest. Then it appears what good proficients we have been in time of health.

Optimi sumus dum infirmi sumus.

Carnall men are oft led along by false hopes suggested by others, and cherished by themselves, that they shall live still, and doe well, till death comes, and cuts off their vaine confidence, and their life both at once, before ever they are acquainted what it is to trust in Gods might, in the use of meanes. We should labour to learne of S. Paul in desperate cases, to receive the sentence of death, and not to trust in our selves, but in God that raiseth the dead. He that raiseth our dead bodies out of the grave, can raise our diseased bodies out of the bed of sicknesse, if he hath a pleasure to serve himselfe by us.

2 Cor. 1.9.

In all kinde of troubles, it is not the ingredients that God puts into the Cup

Cap. 24.

Sin the
greatest
trouble.

so much afflicts us, as the ingredients of our distempered passions mingled with them. The sting and coare of them all is *sin*: when that is not onely pardoned, but in some measure healed, and the proud flesh eaten out, then a healthy soul will beare any thing. After repentance, that trouble that before was a correction, becomes now a tryall and exercise of grace. *Strike Lord* (saith *Luther*) *I beare any thing willingly, because my finnes are forgiven.* We should not be cast down so much about outward troubles, as about sinne, that both procures them, and inuenomes them. We see by experience, when conscience is once set at liberty, how chearefully men will goe under any burthen: therefore labour to keep out sin, and then let come what will come.

Avoid not
trouble by
sinne.

It is the foolish wisdom of the world to prevent trouble by sin, which is the way indeed to pull the greatest trouble upon us. For sinne dividing betwixt God and us, moveth him to leave the soule to intangle it selfe in its owne wayes. When the conscience is cleare, then there is nothing between God and us, to hinder our trust. Outward troubles rather drive us
nearer

The Soules Conflict.

361

Cap. 24.

1 Pet. 4. 3.
21.

John 1.

Hays. ult.

* Melior est
tristitia, ini-
qua patien-
tia, quam
laetitia, ini-
qua facien-
tia. Aug.

neerer unto God, and stand with his love. But sin defileth the soule, and sets it further from God. *It is well doing* that enables us to commit our soules cheerefully unto him. Whatsoever our outward condition be, if *our hearts condemne us not* we may have boldnesse with God. In any trouble our care should be, not to avoid the trouble: but sinfull miscariage *in* and *about* the trouble, and so *trust God*. It is a heavy condition to be under the burthen of trouble, and under the burthen of a guilty conscience both at once. When men will *walke in the light of their owne fire*, and the sparkes which they have kindled *themselves*, it is just with God, that they should lie down in sorrow.

Whatsoever injuries wee suffer from those that are ill affected to us, let us commit our cause to the God of vengeance, and not meddle with his prerogative. He will revenge our cause better than we can, and more perhaps than wee desire. The wronged side, is the safer side *. If instead of meditating revenge, wee can so overcome our selves, as to pray for our enemies, and deserve well of them, wee shall both sweeten our owne spirits, and prevent

out of our beds? Nay we are raised up already in Christ our head: *who is the resurrection and the life*, in whom we may triumph over death, that triumpheth over the greatest Monarchs, as a disarmed and conquered enemy. Death is the death of it selfe, and not of us. If wee would have faith ready to die by, wee must exercise it well in living by it, and then it will no more faile us, than the good things we lay hold on by it, untill it hath brought us into heaven, where that office of it is laid aside: here is the prerogative of a true Christian above an hypocrite and a worldling, when as their trust, and the thing they trust in, failes them, then a true beleevers trust, stands him in greatest stead.

In regard of our *state after death*, a Christian need not be disquieted, for the *Angels* are ready to doe their office in carrying his soule to *Paradise*, those *Mansions prepared for him*. His Saviour will be his Judge, and the Head will not condemn the members: *then* he is to receive the fruit and end of his Faith, the reward of his Hope; which is so great and so sure, that our trusting in God for that, strength-

Comfort
from the
state after
death.

John 14.2
+ 13d 1

neth

Cap. 14.

nerth the heart to trust him for all other things in our passage; so that the refreshing of our faith in these great things, refreshes its dependence upon God for all things here below. And how strong helpes have wee to uphold our faith in those great things which wee are not able to conceive of, till we come to possesse them? Is not our husband there? and hath he not taken possession for us? doth he not keepe our place for us? Is not our flesh there in him? and his Spirit below with us? have we not some first fruits and earnest of it before hand? Is not Christ now a fitting and preparing of us daily, for what he hath prepared and keepes for us? Whither tends all wee meet with in this world, that comes betwixt us and heaven, as desertions, inward conflicts, outward troubles, and death at last, but to fit us for a better condition hereafter, and by Faith therein, to stirre up a strong desire after it.

1 Thef. 4. Comfort one another with these things, saith the Apostle, these be the things will comfort the soule.

C A P. X X V.

Of the defects of gifts, disquieting the soule. As also the afflictions of the Church.

AMong other things, there is nothing more disquiets a Christian, that is called to the fellowship of Christ and his Church here, and to glory hereafter, than that he sees himselfe unfurnished with those gifts that are fit for the calling of a Saint; As likewise for that particular standing and place wherein God hath set him in this world, by being a member of a body politick.

For our *Christian calling*, wee must know that Christianity is a matter rather of Grace than of gifts, of obedience than of parts. *Gifts* may come from a more common worke of the Spirit, they are common to castawayes, and are more for others than for our selves. *Grace* comes from a peculiar favour of God, and especially for our owne good. In the same duty, where there is required gifts and grace, (as in *prayer*) one may performe it with evidence of greater grace, than ano-

Comfort
in regard
of our ge-
nerall cal-
ling.

Cap. 25.
Exod. 7. 11

ther of greater parts. *Moses* (a man not of the best speech) was chosen before *Aaron*, to speake to God, and to strive with him by Prayer, whilest *Israel* fought with *Amalek* with the sword. It is a businesse more of the heart than of the tongue, more of groanes than of words, which groanes and sighes, the Spirit will alwayes stirre up even in the worst condition. Yet for parts there is no member, but it is fitted with some abilities, to doe service in the body, and by faith may grow up to a greater measure. For God calls none to that high condition, but whom in some measure he fits to be an usefull member, and endues with a publique spirit.

But that is the measure which Christ thinkes fit; who will make up that in the body, which is wanting in any particular member. God will encrease the measure of our gifts, as occasion shall bee offered to draw them forth: for there is not the greatest, but may have use both of the parts, and graces of the meanest in the Church. And here the soule may by a spirit of faith goe to God in this manner: Lord, the estate of Christianity unto which

which thy love in Christ hath called, and advanced mee, is an high condition; and there is need of a great measure of grace, to uphold the credit and comfort of it. Whom thou callest unto it, thou dost in some measure furnish, to walke worthy of it. Let this be an evidence to my soul of the truth of thy call, that I am enabled by the Spirit for those duties that are required; in confidence of which assistance, I will set upon the worke: *Thou hast promised to give wisdom to them that aske it, and to upbraid none with their unworthinesse. Nay, thou hast promised the spirit of all grace to those that beg it; it is that which I need, and it is no more than thou hast promised.*

Cap. 27.

Jam. 3. 5.

Onely it must be remembred, that we doe not walke above our parts and graces, the issue whereof will bee discouragement in our selves, and disgrace from others.

Caution.

The like may be said for our particular calling, wherein we are to expresse the graces of our Christian calling, and *serve one another in love*, as members of the State as well as of the Church, therefore every one must have 1. a calling, 2. a

Directions
for a com-
fortable
use of our
particular
calling.
Gal. 5. 22.

Cap. 25.
Pares ne-
gotio.

Ier. 48. 10.

lawfull, 3. a usefull calling, 4. a calling fitted for his parts, that he may be even for his businesse, 5. a lawfull entrance, and calling thereunto, 6. and a lawfull demeanour in the same. Though the Orbe and Sphere we walk in be little, yet we must keep within the bounds of it, because for our carriage in that, we must give a strict account, and there is no calling so meane, but a man shall find enough to give a good account for. Our care must be to know our worke, and then to doe it and so to doe it, as if it were unto God, with conscience of moderate diligence, for over-doing, and over-working any thing, comes either from ostentation, or distrust in God: And negligence is so farre from getting any blessing, that it brings us under a *curse* for *doing Gods worke negligently*. For wee must thinke our callings to be services of God, who hath appointed us our standing therein.

That which belongs to us in our calling, is care of discharging our duty; that which God takes upon him, is assistance and good successe in it. Let us doe our worke, and leave God to doe his owne. Diligence and trust in him is onely ours,
the

the rest of the burthen is his. In a Family the Fathers and the Masters care is the greatest, the childs care is onely to obey, and the servants to doe his worke, care of provision and protection doth not trouble them. Most of our disquietnesse in our calling, is that we trouble our selves about Gods worke. Trust God and bee doing, and let him alone with the rest. He stands upon his credit so much, that it shall appeare we have not trusted him in vaine, even when wee see no appearance of doing any good. Peter fished all night and caught nothing, yet upon Christs word he casts in his net again, and caught so many fish as *brake his net*. Covetousnesse (when men will be richer than God would have them) troubles all, *it troubles the house*, the whole family, and the house within us our precious soule, which should be a quiet house for Gods Spirit to dwell in, whose seat is a quiet spirit. If men would follow Christs method, and *seeke first the Kingdome of heaven*, all other things would bee cast upon them. If thoughts of insufficiency in our places discourage us, remember what God saith to *Moses*, when he pretended disability to

Cap. 25.

Luke 5. 8.

Mat. 6. 33.

Cap. 29.
Exod. 4. 11.

Object.

Ans.

Hab. 3.
Psal. 12.

Comfort
in regard
of the af-
flictions
of the
Church.

speake, *Who hath made mans mouth, have not I the Lord?* All our sufficiency for every calling is from God.

But you will say, *Though by Gods blessing my particular condition be comfortable, yet the state of Gods people abroad, and the miseries of the times disquiet me.*

We complaine of the times, but let us take heed we be not a part of the misery of the times: that they be not the worse for us. Indeed he is a dead member, that takes not to heart the ill of the times, yet here is place for that complaint, *Help Lord.* In these tempests doe as the Disciples did, Cry to Christ to rebuke the tempests and stormes. This is the day of *Jacobs* trouble; let it also be the day of *Jacobs* trust; let the body doe as the head did in the like case, and in time it shall be with the body as it is with the head.

In this case it is good to lay before God all the promises made to his Church, with the examples of his presence in it, and deliverance of the same in former times. God is never neerer his Church than when trouble is neere: when in earth they conclude an utter overthrow, God is in heaven concluding a glorious delive-

deliverance: usually after the lowest ebbe, followes the highest spring-tide. Christ stands upon *Mount Zion*. There is a Counsell in heaven, that will dash the mould of all contrary Counsels on earth; and which is more, God will worke the raising of the Church, by that very meanes by which his enemies seeke to ruine it. *Let us stand still and behold the salvation of the Lord.* God gave too deare a price for his Church, to suffer it long in the hands of mercilesse enemies.

As for the seeming flourishing of the enemies of Gods Church, it is but for a time, and that a short time, and a measured time. *The wicked plot against the just,* they are plotters and plowers of mischiefe; they are skilfull and industrious in it, but they reap their owne ruine. *Their day is a coming, and their pit is in digging:* take heed therefore of *fretting*, because of the man *that bringeth wicked devices to passe;* for *the armes of the wicked shall be broken.* We should helpe our faith by observing Gods executing of judgement in this kinde. It cannot but vex the enemies of the Church, to see at length a disappointing of their projects, but then to see the

Psal. 37. 12
Iob. 4. 8.

Psal. 37. 12
Psal. 94. 13

Psal. 37. 7.
Psal. 37. 17
Reade
Psalmes
10. 37. 94.
129. &c.

Cap. 37.

Psal. 73.

mould of all their deuyces turned upon their owne heads, will more torment them.

In this case, it will much comfort to goe into the Sanctuary, for there wee shall bee able to say, *Yet God is good to Israel.* God hath an Arke for his, there is no condition so ill, but there is Balme in *Gilead*, comfort in *Israel*. *The depths of misery are never beyond the depths of mercy.* God oft for this very end, strips his Church of all helps below, that it may onely rely upon him: and that it may appeare that the Church is ruled by an higher power than it is opposed by. *And then is the time when we may expect great deliverances of the Church, when there is a great faith in the great God.*

From all that hath been said, we see that the onely way to quiet the soule is, to lay a charge upon it to trust God, and that unquietnesse and impatiency, are symptomes and discoveries of an unbelieving heart.

CAP.

C A P. XXVI.

Of diuine reasons in a beleeuer. Of his
minding to praise God, more than to bee
deliuered.

TO goe on. [*I shall yet praise him.*]

In these words *David* expresseth
the reasons and grounds of his trust,
namely from the interest he had in God
by experience and speciall covenant:
wherein in generall we may observe, that
those who truly trust in God, labour to
back their faith with sound arguments;
faith is an understanding grace, it knowes
whom it trusts, and *for what*, and upon
what *grounds* it trusts: Reason of it selfe
cannot find what we should beleeve, yet
when God hath discovered the same,
faith tells us there is great reason to be-
leeve it; *faith* useth reason (though not
as a ground, yet) as a sanctified instrument
to find out Gods grounds, that it may re-
ly upon them. He beleeves best, that
knowes best why he should beleeve, Con-
fidence, and love, and other affections
of the soule, though they have no reason
grafted in them, yet thus farre they are
reasona-

Back faith
with
strong
reason.

Cap. 26.

reasonable, as that they are in a wise man raised up, guided, and laid downe with reason; or else men were neither to be blamed nor praised for ordering their affections aright; whereas not onely civill vertue, but *grace* it selfe is especially conversant in ruling the affections by sanctified reason.

The soule guides the will and affections otherwise then it doth the outward members of the body. It swayes the affections of *confidence, love, joy, &c.* as a Prince doth his wiser subjects, and as Counsellors doe a well ordered State by ministering reasons to them; but the soul governes the outward members by command, as a master doth a slave, * his will is enough. The hand and foot move upon command, without regarding any reason; but we will not *trust* and rejoyce in God without reason, or a shew of reason at the least.

* Stat pro
ratione vo-
luntas.

Sin hath
its reason.

Sinne it selfe never wanted a reason, such as it is, but we call it *unreasonable*, because it hath no good reason for it; for reason being a beame of God, cannot strengthen any worke of darknesse. God having made man an understanding crea-
ture,

ture, guides him by a way futable to such a condition, and that is the reason why God in mercy yeelds so far to us in his word, as to give us so many reasons of our affiance in him. What is encouragement and comfort, but a demonstration to us of greater reasons to raise us up, than there are to cast us down?

Dauids reasons (here) are drawne partly from some *promise* of deliverance, and partly from Gods *nature* and *dealing* with him, *whom*, as he had formerly found an *healing*, and a *saving* God, so hee expects to find him still; and partly from the *covenant of grace*, he is *my God*.

The chiefe of his reasons are fetched from God, what hee is in *himselfe*, and what he is and will be to *his children*, and what to him in particular; though godly men have *reasons* for their *trust*, yet those reasons be *divine* and spirituall as *faith* it selfe is; for as naturally as beames come from the Sunne, and branches from the *roote*, even so by divine discourse one truth issueth from another. And as the beames and the Sunne, as the roote and branches are all of one nature, so the grounds of comfortable truths, and
reasons

Cap. 26.
A godly
mans rea-
sons are
divine.

reasons taken from those grounds, are both of the same divinity and authority, though in time of *temptation* discourse is oft so troubled, that it cannot see, how one truth riseth from another, this is one priviledge of *heaven*, that our knowledge there shall not bee so much *discursive*, proving one thing by another, as *definitive*, seeing things in their *grounds* with a more present view: the soule being then raised and enlarged to a present conceiving of things, and there being no flesh and blood in us, to raise objections that must be satisfied with *reasoning*.

Sometimes in a clearer state of the soule, *faith* hath not so much use of reasons, but upon neere and sweet communion with God, and by reason of some likenesse between the soule that hath a divine nature stamped upon it, and God, it presently without any long discourse, runneth to God as it were by a supernaturall instinct, as by a naturall instinct a child runneth to his Father in any distress. Yea, and from that common light of nature, which discovereth there is a God, even naturall men in extremities will run to God, and God as the Author of nature will

will sometimes heare them, as hee doth the young *Ravens* that cry unto him; but comfortably, and with assurance onely those have a familiar recourse unto him, that have a sanctified sutable disposition unto God, as being well acquainted with him.

Sometimes againe *faith* is put to it to use reasons to strengthen it self, and therefore the soule studieth arguments to help it selfe by, either from inward store laid up in the soule, or else it hearkeneth, and yeelds to reason suggested by others; and there is no gracious heart, but hath a frame sutable and agreeable to any holy and comfortable truth that shall bee brought and inforced upon it; there is something in his spirit that answers what ever comes from the Spirit of God: though perhaps it never heard of it before, yet it presently claimes kindred of it, as comming from the same blessed Spring, the *holy Spirit*; and therefore a gracious heart sooner takes comfort than another, as being prepared to close with it.

The *Reasons* here brought by *David*, are not so much arguments to convince his

Cap. 26.

his *iudgement*, as motives and inducements to incline his *will* to trust in God: for *trusting* being a holy relying upon God, carrieth especially the *will* to him; now the *will* is led with the goodnesse of things, as the *understanding* is led with truth; the heart must be sweetned with consideration of love and mercy in him whom we trust, as well as convinced of his ability to doe us good, the cords that draw the heart to trust, are the *cords of love*, and the cords of love are especially the love of him to us whom wee love; and therefore the most prevailing reasons that carrie the whole heart, are such as are drawn from the sweetnesse of God, whereby the heart is opened and enlarged to expect all good, and nothing but good from him.

But we must remember that neither *reasons* from the truth and power of God, nor *inducements* or allurements from the goodnesse of God, will further prevaile with the soule, then it hath a fresh light and relish brought into it by the Spirit of God, to discern of those reasons, and answer the contrary.

[*I will praise him.*] David here minds praising

praising of God more than his owne delivery, because he knew his owne delivery was intended on Gods part, that hee might be glorified. It is an argument of an excellent spirit, when all selfe-respects are drowned in the glory of God; and there is nothing lost therein, for our best being is in God. A Christian begins with loving God for himselfe; but he ends in loving himselfe in and for God: and so his end, and Gods end, and the end of all things else, concenter and agree in one. We may ayme at our owne good, so we bring our hearts to referre it to the chief good, as a lesse circle may well bee contained in a greater, so that the lines drawn from both circles, meet in one middle point. It is an excellent ground of sincerity, to desire the favour of God, not so much out of selfe-aymes, as that God may have the more free and full praise from us, considering the soule is never more fit for that blessed duty, than when it is in a cheerefull plight.

It rejoyced David more, that he should have a large heart to serve God, than that he should have enlargement of condition. Holy dispositions think not so much of the

Cap. 36.

the time to come, that it will be sweet to them, as that it will further Gods praise. True grace raiseth the soule above selfe-respects, and resteth not till it comes to the chiefe end, wherein its happinesse consists.

God is glorified in making us happy, and we (enjoying happinesse) must glorifie God. Although God condescend so low unto us, as not onely to allow us, but to enjoyne us to looke to our owne freedome from misery, and enjoyment of happinesse, yet a soule throughly seasoned with *grace*, mounteth higher, and is carried with pure respects to advance Gods glory; yea sometimes so farre, as to forget its own happinesse, it respects it selfe for God, rather than God for it selfe. A heavenly soule is never satisfied, untill it be as neere God as is attaineable. And the neerer a creature comes to God, the more it is emptied of it selfe, and all selfe-aymes. Our happinesse is more in *him*, than in our selves. *Wee seeke our selves most, when we deny our selves most.* And the more we labour to advance God, the more we advance our own condition in him.

[I will praise.] David thinks of his own duty in praising God, more than of Gods worke in delivering him: Let us thinke of what is our duty, and God will thinke of what shall be for our comfort; we shall feel God answering what we looke for from him, in doing what he expects from us. Can we have so meane thoughts of him, as that we should intend his glory, and he not much more intend our good?

This should be a strong plea unto us in our prayers, to prevaile with God, when we ingage our selves upon the revelation of his mercy to us, to yeeld him all the praises. Lord, as the benefit and comfort shall be mine, so the praises shall be thine.

It is little lesse than blasphemy, to praise God for that which by unlawfull shifts we have procured; for besides the *hypocrisie* of it (in seeming to sacrifice to him, when we sacrifice indeed to our own wies and carnall helps) we make him a Patron of those wayes which he most abhors; and it is *Idolatry* in the highest degree, to transforme God so in our thoughts, as to thinke he is pleased with that which comes from his greatest enemy.

We ought not to praise God in doing evill.

Cap. 16.

enemy. And there is a grosse mistake to take Gods curse for a blessing; to thrive in an ill way, is a spirituall judgement, extreamly hardening the heart.

It is an argument of *Dauids* sincerity here, that he meant not to take any indirect course for delivering himselfe, because hee intended to *praise God*, which as no guilty conscience can offer, (being afraid to looke God in the face) so God would abhorre such a sacrifice, were it offered to him. S. *Paul* was stirred up to *praise God*, but withall he was assured *God would preserve him from every evil worke.*

2 Tim. 4. 18

adgus
2 Tim. 4. 18
1000 000000
gubd
1112

1 Sam. 27.
10.

Sometimes indeed where there is no malicious intention, God pardons some breakings out of flesh and bloud, endeavouring to help our selves in danger, so farre as not to take advantage of them to desert us in trouble, as in *David* who escaped from *Achish* by *counterfeiting*; and this yeelds a double ground of thankfullnesse, partly for Gods over-looking our miscarriage, and partly for the deliverance it selfe. Yet this indulgence of God, will make the soule more ashamed afterward, for these sinfull shifts, therefore

it

it must be no president to us. There can neither be grace nor wisdom in setting upon a course, wherein we can neither pray to God for successe in, nor blesse God when he gives it. In this case God most blesseth, where he most crosseth, and most curseth where the deluded heart thinks he blesseth most.

C A P. XXVII.

In our worst condition wee have cause to praise God. Still ample cause in these dayes.

[*I shall yet praise him.*] Or, yet I will praise God; that is, however it goeth with mee, yet as I have cause, so I have a spirit to praise God; when we are at the lowest, yet it is a mercy that we are *not consumed*; we are never so ill, but it might be worse with us; whatsoever is lesse than hell, is undeserved. It is a matter of praise, that yet we have time and opportunity to get into a blessed condition. *The Lord hath afflicted mee sore, but hee hath not delivered mee to death, saith David.*

Psa. 138.

Cap. 27.

In the worst times there is a presence of God with his children.

1.

1. In moderating the measure of the crosse, that it be not above their strength.

2.

Psal. 125. 3

2. In moderating the time of it, *The rod of the wicked shall not rest long upon the lot of the righteous.* God limits both measure and time.

3.

3. He is present in mixing some comfort, and so allaying the bitterneesse of a crosse.

4.

4. Yea, and he supports the soul by inward strength; so as though it faint, yet it shall not utterly faile.

5.

5. God is present in sanctifying a cross for good, and at length when hee hath perfected his own work in his, he is present for a finall deliuerance of them. A sound hearted Christian hath alwayes a God to goe to, a promise to goe to, former experience to go to, besides some present experiences of Gods goodnesse which he injoyes: for the present he is a child of God, a member of Christ, an heire of heaven; hee dwels in the love of God in the crosse, as well as out of it, he may be cast out of his happy condition in the world, but never out of Gods favour.

If

The Soules Conflict.

385

If Gods children have cause to praise God in their worst condition, what difference is there betwixt their best estate and their worst?

Cap. 17.
Object.

Howsoever Gods children have continuall occasion to praise God, yet there be some more especiall seasons of praising God than others, there be dayes of Gods owne making, of purpose to rejoyce in, wherein we may say, *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce therein.* And this I think is chiefly intended here. David comforts himselfe with this, that however it was now with him, yet God would deale so graciously with him hereafter, that he should have cause to blesse his name.

Ans.

Psalm. 118. 24

Though in evill times we have cause to praise God, yet so we are, and such are our spirits (for the most part) that affliction straitens our hearts. Therefore the Apostle thought it the fittest duty in affliction to pray, *Is any afflicted? let him pray,* saith James; *Is any joyfull? let him sing Psalmes:* shewing that the day of rejoycing is the fittest day of praising God. Every worke of a Christian is beautifull in its own time, the graces of Christianity

Jam. 5. 13.

Cap. 37.

Psal. 51. 15

Praise is
most com-
ly in pro-
sperity.

Christians
have con-
tinuall
ground of
communi-
on with
God.

have their severall offices at severall seasons, in trouble, *prayer* is in its season, In the evill day *call upon me*, saith God: In better times *praises* should appeare and shew themselves. When God manifest his goodnesse to *his*, he gives them grace with it, to manifest their thankfulness to him. Praising of God is then most comely (though never out of season) when God seemes to call for it, by renewing the sense of his mercies in some fresh favour towards us. If a bird will sing in Winter, much more in the Spring. If the heart be prepared in the Winter time of adversity to praise God, how ready will it be when it is warmed with the glorious Sunshine of his favour?

Our life is nothing, but as it were a *webbe* woven with interminglings of wants and favours, *crosses* and *blessings*, *standings* and *fallings*, *combate* and *victory*, therefore there should be a perpetuall intercourse of *praying* and *praising* in our hearts. There is alwayes a ground of communion with God in one of these kinds, till we come to that condition wherein all wants shall bee supplied, where indeed is onely matter of *praise*.

Yet

Yet praising God in this life, hath this prerogative, that here we praise him *in the midst of his enemies*. In heaven all will be in comfort with us. God esteemes it an *honour* in the midst of devils, and wicked men (whose life is nothing but a dishonour of him) to have those that will make his *name* (as it is in it selfe, so) *great* in the world.

David comforts himselfe in this, that he *should praise God*; which shewes hee had inured himselfe well before to this holy exercise, in which hee found such comfort, that he could not but *joy* in the fore-thoughts of that time, wherein he should have fresh occasion of his former acquaintance with God. Thoughts of this nature enter not into a heart that is strange to God.

Thoughts
of praise
should be
precious to
us,

It is a speciall Art in time of misery, to thinke of matter of *joy*, if not for the present, yet for the time *to come*; for joy disposeth to *praise*, and praise again stirres up *joy*; these mutually breed one another, even as the seed brings forth the tree, and the tree brings forth the seed. It is wisdom therefore to set *faith* on work, to take as much comfort as we can from

Cap. 27.

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 2280010
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Heb. 11. 1.

future promises, that we may have comfort and strength for the *present*, before we have the full possession of them. It is the nature of *faith* to antedate blessings, by making them that are to be performed *hereafter*, as present *now*, because we have them in the *promise*. If God had not allowed us to take many things in trust for the time *to come*, both for his glory, and our good, he would never have left such rich promises to us. For *faith* doth not onely give glory to God for the *present* (in a present beleeving of his truth, and relying upon him) but as it lookes forward, it sees an *everlasting* ground of praising God, and is stirred up to praise him *now*, for that *future* matter of praise, which it is sure to have *hereafter*. The very hopes of future good, made *David* praise God for the present. If the happy condition we looke for were present, we would embrace it with present praises. Now *faith* is the evidence of things not seen, and gives a being to that, which is not; whereupon a true beleeving soule cannot but be a praising soule. For this end God reveales before hand what wee shall have, that before hand wee should praise

praise him, as if we possessed it. For that is a great honor to his truth, when we esteeme of what he speakes, as done, and what he promiseth, as already performed. Had we not a perpetual confidence in the perpetuity of his love to us, how is it possible we should praise him?

Cap. 27.

But we want those grounds for the time to come which David had, he had particular promises which we want,

Object.

Though we want *Vrim* and *Thummin*, and the Prophets to foretell us what the times to come shall be, yet we have the Canon of Scripture enlarged, we live under a more glorious manifestation of Christ, and under a more plentiful shedding of the Spirit, whereby that want is abundantly supplied; we have generall promises for the time to come, that *God will never faile nor forsake us*; that *he will be with us in fire and in water*, that *he will give an issue to the temptation*, and that *the issue of all things shall be for our good*, that *we shall reape the quiet fruit of righteousness*, and *no good thing will he withhold from them that tend a godly life*, &c. If we had a spirit of faith to apply these generalls, we should see much of Gods

Ans.

I.

Deut. 31.6

Heb. 12.11

Psal. 84.11

Cap. 27.

Gods goodnesse in particular.

2.

Besides generall promises, wee have some particular ones for the time to come; of the confusion of *Antichrist*, of the conversion of the *Jewes*, and fulnesse of the *Gentiles*, &c. which though we perhaps shall never live to see, yet we are members of that body, which hereafter shall see the same, which should stirre up our hearts to praise God, as if we did enjoy the present fulfilling of them our selves, for *faith* can present them to the soule, as if they were now present.

3.

Some that have a more neere communion with God, may have a particular faith of some particular deliverances, whereupon they may ground particular prayer. “ *Luther* praying for a sick friend, “ who was very comfortable, and usefull “ to him, had a particular answer for “ his recovery, whereupon he was so confident, that he sent word to his friend, “ that hee should certainly recover. “ *Latimer* prayed with great zeale for “ three things, 1. That Queen *Elizabeth* “ might come to the Crown. 2. That he “ might seale the truth with his heart “ bloud. 3. And that the Gospel might be

Fred. Myco

1.

2.

3.

be restored *once again, once again*, which he expressed with great vehemency of spirit. All which three GOD heard him in. But the priviledges of a few must not be made a generall rule for all. Priviledges goe not out of the persons, but rest there. Yet if men would maintaine a neerer communion with God, there is no doubt but he would reveale himselfe in more familiar manner to them, in many particulars than usually he doth. Those particular promises in the 91. Psalme, and other places, are made good to such as have a particular faith, and to all others (with those limitations annexed to promises of that nature) so far forth as God seeth it will induce to their good and his owne glory, and so farre forth as they depend upon him in the use of meanes; And is not this sufficient to stay a gracious heart?

But not to insist upon particular promises and revelations, (the performance whereof we enjoy *here* in this present life) we have rich and precious promises of finall and full deliverance from all evill, and perfect enjoying of all good in that life which is to come; yet not *so to come*, but

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Psal. 31. 19.

but that we have the earnest and first fruits of it here; All is not kept for heaven; Wee may say with *David*, *Oh how great is thy goodnesse, which thou hast laid up for them that feare thee*, and (not onely so, but) how great is that goodnesse which thou hast wrought in them that trust in thee, even *before the sons of men*! God treasures not up all his goodnesse for the time to come, but layes much of it out daily *before* such as have eyes to behold it.

Heb. 12. 2.

Now Gods maine end in revealing such glorious promises of the life to come is, that they might be a ground of comfort to us, and of praise to him even in this life; And indeed what can be grievous in this world to him that hath heaven in his eye? What made our blessed Saviour *endure the crosse*, and *despise shame*, but the joy of *glory to come set before him*?

The duty that *David* brought his heart to before he had a full enjoyment of what he looked for, was patient *waiting*, it being Gods use to put a long date oftentimes to the performance of his promises; *David* after he had the promise of a Kingdome

Waiting
upon God
a necessary
duty.

dome; was put off a long time ere hee was invested to it; *Abraham* was an old man before he enjoyed his sonne of the promise; *Joseph* stayed a long time before he was exalted; Our blessed Saviour himselfe was thirty foure yeares old before he was exalted up into glory.

God deferrers, but his deferring is no empty space, wherein no good is done, but there is in that space a fitting for promises. Whilest the seed lyeth hid in the earth, time is not lost, for Winter fits for Spring, yea the harder the Winter, the more hopefull the Spring; yet were it a meer empty space, we should hold out, because of the great things to come; but being onely a preparing time, we should passe it with the lesse discouragement. Let this support us in all the thwartings of our desire; it is a folly to thinke, that we should have Physick and health both at once; we must indure the working of Gods Physick; when the sick humour is carried away and purged, then we shall enjoy desired health. God promisseth forgivenesse of sinne, but thou findest the burthen of it daily on thee. Cheere up thy selfe, when the morning

Cap. 27.

What it is
to wait
on God.

is darkeſt, then comes day ; after a weary week comes a Sabbath, and after a ſight victory will appeare. Gods time is beſt, therefore reſolve upon waiting his leiſure. For the better demeaning of our ſelves hercin, we muſt know we muſt ſo *waite*, that we provoke not in the meane time his patience on whom wee depend, by putting forth our hand to any evil, which indeed is a croſſing of our hopes. Therefore waiting upon God, is alwayes joyned with *doing good*. There is an influence in the thing hoped for, in the ſpirit of him that truly hopes, ſtirring him up to a ſutable conformity, by purging himſelfe of whatſoever will not ſtand with the holineſſe of that condition. *Waiting* implyes all graces, as *Patience*, *Perſeverance*, *Longſuffering* in holding out, notwithstanding the tediousneſſe of time deferred ; *Courage*, and breaking through all difficulties that ſtand between. For what is *waiting* indeed, but a continuing in a gracious inoffenſive courſe, till the accompliſhment of our deſires ?

Whence we may diſcerne a maine difference betwixt a Chriſtian, and a carnall man, who is ſhort-ſpirited, and all for
the

the present, hee will have his good here, whereas a Saint of God continues still waiting, though all things seeme contrary to what he expects. The presence of things to come is such to *faith*, as it makes it *despise the pleasure of sinne for a season*. What evidence of goodnesse is it, for a man to be good onely upon the apprehension of something that contents him? Here is the glory of *faith*, that it can upon Gods bare promise, crosse it selfe in things pleasing to nature, and raise up the soule to a disposition, some wayes answerable to that blessed estate, which (though yet it injoyes not, yet) it is undoubtedly perswaded of, and looks for. What can incourage us more to *waite*, than this, that the good wee waite for, is greater than we are able to conceive, yea greater than we can desire or hope for?

This was no presumptuous resolution of *Dauids* owne strength, but it issued from his present truth of heart, (so farre as he knew the same;) together with an humble dependence upon God, both for deliverance, and a heart to praise him for it, because Gods benefits are usually entire, and

Cap. 28.

and are sweetned with such a sense of his love, as causeth a *thankfull heart*, which (to a true Christian) is a greater blessing than the deliverance it selfe, as making the soule better. *David* doth acknowledge with humble admiration, that a heart enlarged comes from God, *Who am I* (saith he) *and who are my people?*

Hee mentioneth here *praising God*, instead of *deliverance*, because a heart enlarged to praise God, is indeed the greatest part of the *deliverance*; for by it the soul is delivered out of its owne straits and discontent.

CAP. XXVIII.

Divers qualities of the praise due to God. With helps therein. And notes of Gods hearing our prayers.

No easie
matter to
praise God
aright.

THough this be Gods *due* and our *due*, and in it selfe a delightfull thing, yet it is not so easie a matter to *praise God*, as many imagine: Musick is sweet, but the setting of the strings in tune is unpleasing; our soules will not be long in tune, and it is harsh to us to goe about the setting

setting them in order; like curious Clocks, a little thing will hinder the motion; especially *passion*, which disturbs not only the frame of *grace* in us, but the very frame of *nature*, putting man out of the power and possession of himselfe; and therefore *David* here when he had thoughts of *praising God*, was faine to take up the quarrell betwixt him and his soule first; *praising* sets all the parts and graces of the soul awork; and therefore the soul had need gather it selfe and its strength together to this *duty*.

It requires especially *self-deniall*, from a conscience of our own wants, weaknesses, and unworthinesse; it requires a giving up of our selves, and all ours to be at Gods dispose; the very *ground* and the *fruit* which it yeelds are both Gods; and they never gave themselves truly up to God, that are not ready to give all they have to him whensoever he calls for it; *thankfulnesse* is a *sacrifice*, and in sacrifices there must be *killing* before *offering*, otherwise the sacrifice will be as the offering up some unclean creature; *thanksgiving* is an *Incense*, and there must be fire to burn that Incense; *thanksgiving* requires

Self-deniall
all requisites in praising God.

Cap. 28.

What a
Christian
should doe
in want of
assurance.

Rom. 2. 4.

Resoluti-
on necessa-
ry in Chri-
stianity.

not onely *affections*, but the *beat* of *affe-
ctions*; there must be some assurance of
the benefit we praise God for; and it is
no easie matter to maintain assurance of
our interest in the best things.

Yet in this case if we feel not sense of
assurance, it is good we should praise God
for what we have; we cannot deny but
God offers himself in mercy to us, and
that he intends our good thereby, for so
we ought to construe his mercifull dea-
ling towards us, and not have him in jea-
lousie without ground; if we bring our
hearts to be willing to praise God, for
that we cannot but acknowledge comes
from him, he will be ready in his time to
shew himself more clearly to us; we taste
of his goodnesse many ways, and it is ac-
companied with much patience, and these
in their natures leade us not onely to *re-
pentance*, but likewise to *thankfull* acknow-
ledgement; and we ought to follow that
which God leads us unto, though he hath
not yet acquainted us with his secrets.

It is good in this case to help the soul
with a firm *resolution*, and to back resolu-
tion with a *vow*, not onely in generall that
we will praise, but particularly of some
thing

thing within our own power, (provided it prove no share to us.) For by this means the heart is perfectly gained, and the thing is as good as done in regard of Gods acceptance, and our comfort; because strong resolutions discover *sincerity* without any hypocriticall reservation and hollownes. Always so much sincerity, as a man hath, so much will his inward peace be. *Resolution* as a strong stream bears down all before it; little good is done in Religion without *this*, and with it all is as good as done.

So soon as we set upon this work, we shall feele our spirits to rise higher and higher as the waters in the *Sanctuary*, as the soul grows more and more heated; see how *David* riseth by degrees, *Be glad in the Lord*, and then, *rejoyce ye righteous*; and then, *shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart*; the Spirit of God will delight to carry us along in this duty, untill it leaves our spirits in *heaven*, praising God with the *Saints* and glorious *Angels* there; *To him that hath and useth it shall be given*; he that knoweth God aright, will honour him by trusting of him; he that honours him by trusting him, will

Psal. 32. 11.

Mat. 23. 12

Cap. 28.

honour him by *praying*; and he that honours him by prayer, shall honour him by *praises*; he that honours him by praises *here*, shall perfect his praises in *heaven*; and this will quit the labour of setting and keeping the soule in tune; this trading with God is the richest trade in the world; when we return *praises* to him, he returns new favours to us, and so an everlasting ever-increasing intercourse betwixt God and the soul is maintained; *David* here resolved to *praise God*, because he had assurance of such a deliverance as would yeeld him a ground of praising him.

*Praise, a
sweet In-
cense.*

Praising of God may well be called *Incense*, because as it is sweet in *it self*, and sweet to *God*, so it sweetens all that comes from us. *Love* and *Joy* are sweet in themselves, though those whom we love and joy in, should not know of our affection, nor return the like; but we cannot love and joy in God, but he will delight in us; when we neglect the praising of God, we lose both the comforts of Gods love, and our own too: It is a spirituall judgement to want or lose the sight or sense of Gods favours, for it is a sign of want of spirituall life, or at least liveliness; it shews we
are

are not yet in the state of those whom God hath chosen, to set forth the riches of his glory upon.

When we consider that if we answer not kindnesse, and favour shewed unto us by men, we are esteemed unworthy of respect (as having sinned against the bond of humane society and love) we cannot but much more take shame to our selves, when we consider the disproportion of our carriage, and unkinde behaviour towards God; when in stead of being *temples* of his praise, we become *graves* of his benefits; What a vanity is this in our nature, to stand upon exactnesse of justice, in answering petty curtesies of men, and yet to pass by the substantiall favours of God, without scarce taking notice of them: the best breeding is to acknowledge greatest respects where they are most due, and to think, that if unkindnesse and rudenesse be a sin in *civility*, it is much more in *Religion*; the greatest danger of unthankfulnesse, is in the greatest matter of all; if we arrogate any spirituall strength to our selves in spirituall actions, we commit either *sacriledge* in robbing God of his *due*, or *mockery*, by

Unthank-
fulnes most
harmous to-
wards God.

Cap. 28.

Mal. 1. 8.

Gods love
in every
mercy
chiefly to
be looked
at.

Not to de-
lay our
praises.

praising him for that which we hold to be of our selves; if injustice be to be condemned in man, much more in denying God his due, *Religion* being the first due. It takes much from thankfulnesse, when we have common conceits of peculiar favours, *Praise* is not comely in the mouth of *fools*, God loves no *blind sacrifice*.

We should therefore have wisdom and judgement, not onely to know upon what *grounds* to be thankful; but in what *order*, by discerning what be the best and first favours whence the rest proceed, and which adde a worthinesse to all the rest; it is good to see blessings, as they issue from grace and mercy. It much commends any blessing, to see the love and favour of God in it, which is more to be valued then the blessing it self, as it much commends any thing that comes from him, when we put a respect of thankfulnesse, and love to God upon it; and if we observe, we shall finde the unkindnesse of others to us, is but a correction of our unkindnesse to God.

In *praising God*, it is not good to *delay*, but take advantage of the freshnesse of the blessing; what we adde to *delay*, we take

take from *thankfulnesse*; and withall, lose the prime and first fruits of our affections: It is a wise redeeming of time, to observe the best seasons of *thankfulnesse*; a chearfull heart will best close with a chearfull duty; and therefore it is not good to waste so fit a temper in frivolous things, but after some contentment given to nature, let God have the fruit of his own planting; otherwise it is even no better than the refreshing of him that standeth by a good fire, and crieth *Ah, ah, I am warm.*

Cap. 18.

Ia. 44. 14.

David doth not say, *I will thank God*, but *I shall praise him*; (though he intends *that*) Thanks is then best when it tends to praising, and there ends; for thanks alone shews respect to our own good onely, praises to Gods glory; and in particular to the glory of such excellencies whence the benefit comes; and from thence the soul is enlarged to think highly of all Gods excellencies.

Hanna upon particular thanks for hearing her about a childe, takes occasion to set out Gods other excellencies, and riseth higher and higher, from one to many, from the present time, to that which was to

1 Sam. 2. 1.

Cap. 28.

Psal. 51.

Our thanks
should be
large.

2 Sam. 30.

come, from particular favours to her self, she stirs up others to praise God for his mercy to them; So *David, Deliver me, O God, and my tongue shall sing of thy praises*. He propounds this as an ingagement to the Lord to help him, because it should tend to the enlargement of his glory; he was resolved to improve Gods favour this way.

The Spirit of God works like *new wine*, enlarging the spirit from one degree of praising God to another; and because it foresees the eternity of Gods love, (as far as it can) it endeavours an eternity of Gods praise; a gracious heart upon taste of favour shewed to it self, is presently warmed to spread the praise of God to others, and the more it sees the fruit of trusting God, and his *truth* in performing promise, the more it still honours that *trusting*, as knowing that it lies upon Gods honour, *so honour those that honour him*; blessing will procure blessing; the soul hath never such freedom from sin, as when it is in a thankfull frame; for *thankfulness* issues from a heart truly humbled, and emptied of it self, truly loving and rejoycing in God; and upon any

any sin the spirit is grieved and straitned, and the lips sealed up in such a heart; for the conscience upon any sin, looks upon it not onely as *disobedience* against Gods will and authority, but as *unthankfulnesse* to his goodnesse, and this melterh a godly heart most of all: When *Nathan* told *David* God had done this, and *this* for him, and was ready to doe more, he could not hold in the *confession* of his sin, but relented and gave in presently.

2 Sam. 12. 8.

We ought not only to give *thanks*, but to be *thankfull*, to meditate and study the praises of God. Our whole life should be nothing else but a continuall blessing of his holy Name, endeavouring to bring in all we have, and to lay it out for God and his people, to see where he hath any receivers: our goodnesse is *nothing* to God, we need bring no water to the *fountain*, nor light to the *Sun*. Thankfulnessse is ful of invention, it deviseth liberal things, though it be our duty to be good Stewards of our talents, yet *thankfulnessse* adds a lustre, and a more gracious *acceptance*, as having more of that which God calls for.

We should study Gods praises.

Psal. 16. 2.

Our praising God should not be as sparks out of a *flint*, but as water out of

Praise should be free.

Cap. 28.

Mic. 7. 8.

.8. 21. 11. 22.

Pl. 145. 10.

Liberi 2. 11.
the 5. y. 11. 11.
22. 11. 11.The least
mercy to
be prized.22. 11. 11.
22. 11. 11.

a spring, naturall, ready, free, as Gods love to us is; mercy pleases him, so should praises please us; It is our happinesse when the best part in us, is exercised about the best and highest work; it was a good speech of him that said, If God had made me a Nightingale, I would have sung as a Nightingale, but now God hath made me a man, I will sing forth the praises of God, which is the work of a Saint onely: All thy works blesse thee, and thy Saints praise thee: All things are either blessings in their nature, or so blessed, as they are made blessings to us by the over-ruling comining of him, who maketh all things serviceable to his, even the worst things in this sense are made spirituall to Gods people against their own nature; how great is that goodnesse which makes even the worst things good.

Little favours come from no small love, but even from the same love that God intends the greatest things to us, and are pledges of it; the godly are more thankful for the least favours, then worldly men for the greatest: the affection of the giver inhaunces the gift.

O then let us labour to improve, both what

what we have, and what we are to his glory: It discovers that we love God, (not onely with all our *understanding*, *beats*, and *affections*, but) when with all our *might* and *power*, so farre as we have advantage by any *part*, *relation*, or *calling* whatsoever we endeavour to doe him service, we cannot have a greater honour in the world, than to be honoured of God, to be abundant in this kinde.

Our praise should be recall.

Our time here is short, and we shall all ere long be called to a reckoning, therefore let us study *reall* praises. Gods blessing of us is in *deed*, and so should ours be of him. Thanks in *words* is good, but in *deeds* is better; *leaves* are good, but *fruit* is better; and of fruit, that which *costs* us most. True *praise* requires our whole man, the *judgement* to esteem, the *memory* to treasure up, the *will* to resolve, the *affections* to delight, the *tongue* to speak of, and the *life* to expresse the rich favours of God: what can we think of? what can we call to mind? what can we resolve upon? what can we speak? what can we expresse in our whole course, better than the *praises* of him, of *whom*, and *through whom*, and *to whom* we and *all things* are?

Rom. 11. 36

Our

Cap. 28.

Our whole life should speak nothing but thankfulness, every condition and place we are in, should be a witnesse of our thankfulness; this will make the times and places we live in, the better for us; when we our selves are monuments of Gods mercy, it is fit we should be patterns of his praises, and leave monuments to others: We should think life is given us, to doe something better than life in; we live not to live; our life is not the end of it self, but the praise of the giver: God hath joyned his glory and our happinesse together; it is fit that we should referre all that is good to his glory, that hath joyned his glory to our best good, in being glorified in our salvation.

David concludes, that he should certainly praise God, because he had prayed unto him. Prayers be the seeds of praises, I have sown; therefore I will reap; what we receive as a fruit of our prayers, is more sweet than what we have by a generall providence.

Object.

But how doe we know that God hears our prayers?

Answ.

1.

1. If we regard them our selves, and expect an issue; prayer is a sure adventure,

we

we may well look for a return.

2. It is a sign that God hath heard our prayers, when he stirres up thankfulnesse aforehand upon assurance; thankfulnesse cannot be without either the grace of God, by which we are thankfull, or some tast of the things we are thankful for. God often accepts the prayer, when he doth not grant the thing, and will give us thereby occasion of thanksgiving for his wise care, in changing one blessing for another fitter for us. God regards my prayers, when by prayer my heart is wrought to that frame which he requires, that is, an humble subjection to him, from an acknowledgement of my wants, and his fulnesse. There is nothing stirred up in our hearts by the Spirit, no, not so much as a gracious desire, but God will answer it, if we have a spirit to wait.

3. We may know God hath accepted our prayer, when he makes the way easie and plain after prayer by a gracious providence, when the course of things begin to change, and we meet with comforts instead of former crosses, and finde our hearts quieted and encouraged against what we most feared.

4. Like-

2.

3.

Cap. 28.

4.

4. Likewise earnestnesse in prayer is a sign God hears our prayers, as fire kindled from heaven sheweth God accepts the sacrifice; the ground of prevailing by our prayer, is, that they are put up in a gracious name, and for persons in favour, and dictated by Gods own Spirit; they work in the strength of the blessed Trinity, not their own, giving God the glory of all his excellencies.

Psal. 50. 15.

It is Gods direction to call upon him in trouble, and it is his promise to deliver; and then both his direction and promise that we shall glorifie him: When troubles stir up prayer, Gods answer to them will stir up praises. David when he saith, *I shall praise God*, presupposes God would deliver him, that he might have ground of praising his Name. And he knew God would deliver him, because as from faith he had prayed for deliverance, so he knew it was the order of Gods dealing, to revive after drooping, and refresh after fainting. God knows otherwise that our spirits would fail before him.

Acts 15. 23

A thankfull disposition, is a special help in an afflicted condition, for thankfulness springs from love, and love rejoiceth

in

in suffering. Thankfulness raises the soul higher than it self, it is trading with God, whereby as *we* by him, so he *gains* by us. Therefore the Saints used this as a motive to God, that he would grant their desires, because *the living praise him*, and not the dead. If God expect praise from us, sure he will put us into a condition of praise.

Unthankfulness is a sin detestable both to God and men, and the lesse punishment it receives from humane laws, the more it is punished *inwardly* by secret shame, and *outwardly* by publick hatred, if once it prove notorious. When Gods arrests come forth for denying him his tribute, he chiefly eyes an unthankfull heart, and hates all sin the worse, as there is more unthankfulness in it: the neglect of kindness is taken most unkindly. Why should we load God with injuries, that loadeth us with his blessings? who would requite good with evill? Such mens merities will prove at last so many indictments against them.

I beseech you therefore labour to be men of praises. If in any duty we may expect assistance, we may in this, that altogether concerns Gods glory: the more

Vse.

we

Cap. 28.

Psal. 50. 23

2 Cor. 6. 16

we praise God, the more we shall praise him. When God by grace enlarges the will, he intends to give the deed. Gods children wherein their wills are conformable to Gods will, are sure to have them fulfilled. In a fruitfull ground, a man will sow his best seed. God intends his own glory in every mercy, and he that *praises him, glorifies him*. When our wils therefore carry us to that which God wills above all, we may well expect he will satisfie our desires. The living God is a living fountain never drawn dry, he hath never done so much for us, but he can and will doe more. If there be no end of our praises, there shall be no end of his goodnesse: no way of thriving like to this. By this means we are sure never to be very miserable, how can he be dejected, that by a sweet communion with God sets himself in heaven? nay maketh his heart a kinde of heaven, *A Temple, a holy of holies, wherein Incense is offered unto God*. It is the sweetest branch of our Priestly office, to offer up these daily sacrifices; It is not onely the beginning, but a further entrance of our heaven upon earth, and shall be one day our whole imployment for ever.

Praise

Cap. 28.
Praise is a
just and
due debt.

Praise is a just and due tribute for all Gods blessings; for what else especially do the best favours of God call for at our hands? How do all creatures praise God, but by our mouths? It is a debt always owing, and always paying; and the more we pay, the more wee shall owe; upon the due discharge of this debt, the soul will find much peace. A thankfull heart to God for his blessings, is the greatest blessing of all. Were it not for a few gracious souls, what honour should God have of the rest of the unthankfull world? which should stirre us up the more to be trumpets of Gods praises in the midst of his enemies, because this (in some sort) hath a prerogative above our praising God in heaven; for there God hath no enemies to dishonour him.

This is a duty that none can except against; because it is especially a work of the heart. All cannot shew their thankfulness in giving, or doing great matters, but all may expresse the willingnesse of their hearts. All within us may praise his holy Name, though we have little or nothing without us; and that within us is the thing God chiefly requires. Our heart

Praising of
God, a
duty with-
out excep-
tion.

Psal. 103.

Cap. 28.

is the *Altar* on which wee offer this *Incense*; God looks not to quantity, but to proportion; he accepts a *mite* where there is no more to be had.

Quest.

But how shall we be inabled to this great duty?

Ans.

How we may attain to praise God in some acceptable manner.

I.

A deep consideration of favours.

Enter into a deepe consideration of Gods favours, past, present, and to come; think of the greatnesse and surablenesse of them to our condition, the seasonablenesse and necessity of them every way unto us. Consider how miserable our life were without them, even without common favours; but as for spirituall favours, that make both our naturall and civill condition comfortable, our very life were death, our light were darknesse without these. In all favours think not of them so much, as Gods mercy and love in Christ, which sweetens them. Think of the freeness of this love, and the smallnesse of thy own deserts. How many blessings doth God bestow upon us, above our deserts, yea, above our desires, nay, above our very thoughts? He had thoughts of love to us when we had no thoughts our selves. What had wee been if God had not been good unto us?

How

How many blessings hath God bestowed upon us, that we never prayed for: and yet we are not so ready to *praise God*, as to pray unto him; this more desire of what we want, than esteeming of what we have, shewes too much prevailing of *self-love*. But

Secondly, comparing also our selves with others, wil add a great lustre to Gods favour, considering we are all hewed out of one Rock, and differ nothing from the meanest, but in Gods free love. Who are we that God should single us out for the glory of his rich mercy?

Considering likewise, *that the blessings of God to us, are such as if none but we had them, and God cares for us, as if hee had none else to care for in the world besides.*

These things well pondered, should set the greater price upon Gods blessings; what are wee in nature and grace, but Gods blessings; What is in us, about us, above us? What see we, taste we, enjoy we, but blessings; All we have or hope to have, are but dead favours to us, unlesse we put life into them by a spirit of thankfulness. And shall we be as dead as the earth, as the stones we tread on? Shall we live as if we were resolved God should

2.

By comparing our selves with others.

3.

That Gods blessings to us are, as if we onely were cared for.

Cap. 28.

have no praise by us? Shall wee make our selves God, ascribing all to our selves? Nay, shall we (as many doe) fight against God with his own favours, and turne Gods blessings against himselfe? Shall we abuse peace to security? Plenty to ease, promises to presumption, gifts to pride? How can we please the devill better than thus doing? Oh! the wonderfull patience of God, to continue life to those whose life is nothing else, but a warring against him the giver of life.

2 Sam. 9. 1.

Psal. 118. 1.

Psal. 103. 1.

As God hath thoughts of love to us, so should our thoughts be of praises to him, and of doing good in our places to others for his sake. Think with thy self, Is there any I may honour God by relieving, comforting, counselling? Is there any of *Jonathans* race? Is there any of Christs deare ones? I will doe good to them, that they together with me, and for me may praise God. As *David* here checks himselfe for the failing and disquietnesse of his spirit, and as a cure thereof, thinks of praising God: So let us (in the like case) stirre up our souls as he did, and say, *Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me set forth his holy Name.*

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 18.

Name. We never use our spirits to better purpose, than when by that light we have from God, we stirre them up to look back again to him.

By this it wil appeare to what good purposes we had a being here in the world, and were brought into communion with Christ by the Gospel. The carriage of all things to the right end, shewes whose we are, and whither we tend. It abundantly appeares by Gods revealing of himselfe many wayes to us, as by *Promises, Sacraments, Sabbaths, &c.* that he intended to raise up our hearts to this heavenly duty. The whole gracious dispensation of God in Christ tends to this, that our carriage should be nothing else, but an expression of thankfulnessse to him; that by a free cheerefull and gracious disposition, we might shew wee are the people of Gods free grace, set at liberty from the spirit of bondage, *to serve him without feare*, with a voluntary child-like service, *all the dayes of our lives*.

The excellent use of Thanksgiving.

Luk. i. 74.

CAP. XXIX.

*Of Gods manifold salvation for his people,
And why open, or expressed in the coun-
tenance.*

[Proceed.

*[He is the salvation of my counte-
nance.]*

As *David* strengthens his trust in God, by reason fetcht from the future goodnesse of God apprehended by faith: so he strengthens that reason with another reason fetcht from God, whom he apprehends here as *the salvation of his countenance*. We need reason against reason, and reason upon reason, to steale and strengthen the soule against the on set of contrary reasons.

He is the salvation of my countenance: that is, He will so save as I shall see, and my enemies shall see it; and upon seeing, my *countenance* shall be cheared and lifted up; Gods saving kindnesse shall be read in my countenance, so that all who look on me, shall say, God hath spoken peace to my soul, as well as brought peace to my condition.

He

He saith not *salvation*, but *salvations*: because as our life is subject to many miseries, in *soul*, *body*, and *state*, publique and private, &c. so God hath many *salvations*: If we have a thousand troubles, he hath a thousand wayes of helpe; as he hath more blessings than one, so he hath more *salvations* than one. He saves our souls from sin, our bodies from danger, and our estates from trouble. *He is the Redeemer of his people*; and not onely so, but with him is *plenteous redemption* of all persons, of all parts both of body and soul, from all ill, both of sin and misery, for all times, both now and hereafter. He is an everlasting salvation.

David doth not say, God will save me; but God is salvation it selfe, and nothing but salvation. Our sins onely stop the current of his mercy, but it being above all our sins, will soon scatter that cloud, remove that stop, and then wee shall see and feel nothing but salvation from the Lord. *All his wayes are mercy and peace* to a repentant soul that casts it self upon him.

Christ himselfe is nothing else but *salvation* clothed in our flesh. So old *Simeon*

Cap. 29.
That God
is not only
salvation,
but salva-
tions to
his people.
*Mille mali
species, mil-
le salutis
erupt.*

Psal. 130. 7.

Psa. 15. 10.

Luk. 2. 29.

Cap. 29.

Luke 2. 14.

Think of
God as a
Saviour in
trouble.

Psa. 68. 20.

conceived of him, when he had him in *his armes*, and was willing thereupon to yeeld up his spirit to God; having seen Christ the salvation of God: when we embrace Christ in the armes of our Faith, we embrace nothing but salvation. Hee makes up that sweet name given him by his Father, and brought from heaven by an Angel to the full: a name in the Faith of which, it is impossible for any beleeving soul to sinke.

The devill in trouble presents God to us as a revenging *destroyer*, and unbelcefe presents him under a false vizard; but the skill of *faith* is, to present him as a Saviour clothed with salvation. Wee should not so much look what destruction the devill and his threaten, as what salvation God promiseth. To God belong *the issues of death*, and of all other troubles which are lesser deaths. Cannot he that hath vouchsafed an issue in Christ from eternall death, vouchsafe an issue from all temporall evils? If he will raise our bodies, can he not raise our conditions? He that brought us into trouble, can easily make a way out of it when hee pleaseth. This should bee a ground of resolute

resolute and absolute obedience, even in our greatest extremities, considering God will either deliver us (from death, or by death, and) at length out of death.

So then, when we are in any danger, we see whither to goe for salvation, even to him that is nothing else but *salvation*; but then we must *trust* in him (as *David* doth) and conceive of him as *salvation*, that we may trust in him. If we will not trust in *salvation*, what will wee trust in? and if *salvation* it self cannot save us, what can? out of salvation there is nothing but destruction, which those that seeke it any where out of God, are sure to meet with. How pitifull then is their case, who go to a destroyer for salvation? that seek for help from hell?

Whither to
flye in our
troubles.

Here also we see to whom to return praise in all our deliverances, even to the God of our salvation. The *virgin Mary* was stirred up to magnifie the Lord, but why? *Her spirit rejoyced in God her Saviour*. Whosoever is the instrument of any good, yet salvation is of the Lord; whatsoever brings it, he sends it. Hence in their holy feasts for any deliverance, the cup they drank of, was called *the Cup of salvation*:

Whom to
returne
Praise to
in all our
deliveran-
ces.
Luke 1.

Cap. 29.

Pl. 116. 13.

John 14. 6
 God first
 cheeres
 the heart,
 and then
 the out-
 ward man.

salvation: and therefore *David* when he summons his thoughts, *what to render unto God*; he resolves upon this, to take *the Cup of salvation*. But alwayes remember this, that when we think of God as *salvation*, we must think of him as he is in Christ to his. For, so every thing in God is saving, even his most terrible attributes of *justice* and *power*: out of Christ, the sweetest things in God are terrible. Salvation it selfe will not save out of Christ; who is the onely way of salvation, called the way, the truth, and the life.

David addeth, (*He is the salvations of my countenance*) that is, he will first speak salvation to my soule, and say, *I am thy salvation*; and when the heart is cheered (which is as it were *the Sun of this little world*) the beames of that joy will shine in the countenance. *True joy begins at the center, and so passeth to the circumference the outward man*. The countenance is as the glasse of the soul, wherein you may see the naked face of the soul, according as the severall affections thereof stand. In the countenance of an understanding creature, you may see more then a bare countenance. The spirit of one man may see

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see the countenance of anothers inner man in his outward countenance: which hath a speech of its own, and declares what the heart saith, and how it is affected.

But how comes God to be the salvation of our countenance?

Quest.

I answer: God only graciously shines in the face of Jesus Christ, which we with the eye of faith beholding, receive those beames of his grace, and reflect them back again. God shineth upon us first, and we shine in that *light of his countenance* upon us. The joy of salvation, (especially of spiritual and eternal salvation) is the onely true joy: all other salvations end at last in destruction, and are no further comfortable than they issue from Gods saving love.

Ans.

Pla. 51. 12.

God will have the body partake with the soul; as in matter of *griefe*, so in matter of *joy*, the lanthorn shines in the light of the Candle within.

I.

Why God will have the salvation of his people appear openly.

2.

Again, *God brings forth the joy of the heart into the countenance, for the further spreading and multiplying of joy to others.*

Next unto the sight of the sweet countenance of God, is the beholding of the cheerefull

Cap. 29.

Psa. 142. 7.

Psal. 69. 6.

cheerfull countenance of a Christian friend, rejoycing from true grounds. Whence it is that the joy of one becomes the joy of *many*, and the joyes of many meet in *one*; by which meanes, as many lights together make the greater light, so many lightesome spirits make the greater light of spirit: and so God receiveth the more praise, which makes him so much to delight in the prosperity of his children. Hence it is, that in any deliverance of Gods people, *the righteous do compasse them about*, to know *what God hath done for their souls*; and keep a spirituall Feast with them in partaking of their joy. And the godly have cause to joy in the deliverance of other Christians, because they suffered in their afflictions, and it may be in their sinnes the cause of them, which made them somewhat ashamed. Whence it is, that *Dauids* great desire was, that *those who feared God might not be ashamed because of him*: insinuating that those who feare Gods Name, are ashamed of the falls of Gods people. Now when God delivers them, this reproach is removed, and those that had part in their sorrow, have part in their joy.

Again,

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 29.

3.

Again, God will have salvation so open, that it shall appeare in the countenance of his people, the more to daunt and vex the enemies. *Cainish* hypocrites hang down their heads, when God lifts up the countenance of their brethren; when the countenance of Gods children cleares up, then their enemies hearts and looks, are cloudy. *Ieruselems joy is Babylons sorrow.* It is with the Church and her enemies as it is with a ballance, the scales whereof when one is up the other is down. Whilest Gods people are under a cloud, carnall people insult over them, as if they were men deserted of God. Whereupon they hang down their heads, and the rather, because they think that by reason of their sins, Christ and his Religion will suffer with them. Hence *Davids* care was, that the miseries of Gods people *should be told in Gath.* The chief reason why the enemies of the Church gnash their teeth at the sight of Gods gracious dealing, is, that they take the rising of the Church, to be a presage of their ruine. A lesson which *Hamans* wife had learned.

2 Sam. 1. 20

Esth. 6. 13.

This is a comfort to us in these times of *Jacobs* trouble and *Zions* sorrow: The captivity

Cap. 29.
Pla. 126. 1.
Micah 7. 8.

Zach. 12. 2.

Luk. 18. 5.

captivity of the Church shall return, *as rivers in the South*. Therefore the Church may say, *Rejoyce not over me O my enemy, though I am fallen I shall rise again*. Though Christs Spouse bee now as black as the Pots, yet she shall be white as the Dove. If there were not great dangers, where were the glory of Gods great deliverance? The Church at length will be as *a Cup of trembling*, and as *a burthensome stone*. The blood of the Saints cry, their enemies violence cryes, the prayers of the Church cry for deliverance, and vengeance upon the enemies of the Church: and (as that *importunate widow*) will at length prevaile. Shall the importunity of one poore woman prevaile with an *unrighteous Judge*? and shall not the prayers of many that cry unto the righteous God take effect? If there were Armies of Prayers, as there are Armies of men, we should see the streame of things turned another way. A few *Moseses* in the Mount, would doe more good than many souldiers in the valley. If we would lift up our *hearts* and *hands* to God, he would lift up our countenance. But alas, we either pray not, or crosse our own prayers for want of

of love to the truth of God and his people.

It is we that keepe Antichrist and his faction alive, to plague the unthankfull world. The strength he hath is not from his own cause, but from our want of zeal; we hinder those *Hallelujahs* by private brabbles, coldnesse and indifferency in Religion. The Church begins at this time a little to lift up her head again: Now is the time to follow God with prayers, that he would perfect his own work, and plead his own cause; that he would be revenged not onely of ours, but his enemies: that he would wholly free his Church from that miserable bondage. These beginnings give our faith some hold to be encouraged to goe to God for the fulfilling of his gracious promise, that the Church may rejoyce in the *salvation of the Lord*. God doth but look for some to seek unto him: Christ doth but stay until he is awaked by our prayers. But it is to be feared, that God hath not yet perfected his work in *Zion*. The Church is not fully prepared for a full and glorious deliverance. If God had once his ends in the humiliation of the Church
for

Cap. 29.

for sins past, with resolution of reformation for the time to come, then this age perhaps might *see the salvation of the Lord*, which the generations to come shall be witness of: *We should see Zion in her perfect beauty*. The generations of those that came out of *Egypt* saw and enjoyed the pleasant land which their progenitors were shut out of: who by reason of their murmuring, and looking back to *Egypt*, and forgetfulnesse of the wonders which God had done for, and before them, perished in the wilderness.

Vse.

Rev. 21. 24

There is little cause therefore of envying the present flourishing of the enemies of the Church, and of joyning and colluding with them; for it will prove the wisest resolution to resolve to fall and rise with the Church of Christ, considering the enemies themselves shall say, God hath done great things for them: Kings shall lay their Crowns at *Christs feet*, and *bring all their glory to the Church*.

And for every Christian, this may be a comfort, that though their light for a time may be eclipsed, yet it shall break forth. *David* at this time was accounted an enemy of the State, and had a world
of

of false imputations laid upon him, which he was very sensible of; yet (we see here) he knew at length God would be *the salvation of his countenance.*

But some (as Gideon) may object, If God intend to be so gracious, why is it thus with us?

Object.

The answer is, *Salvation is Gods owne work, humbling and casting down is his strange work*, whereby he comes to his own work. For, when he intends to save, he will seem to destroy first: and when he will justifie, he will condemne first: whom he will revive, he will kill first. Grace and goodnesse countenanced by God, have a native inbred Majesty in them, which maketh the face to shine, and borroweth not its lustre from without, which God at length will have to appeare in its own likeness, howsoever malice may cast a vaile thereon, and disguise it for a time: And though wickednesse (as it is base born, and a child of darknesse) may shelter it self under authority a while, yet it shal hide it self and run into corners. The comfort of comforts is, that at that great day, (the day of all dayes) that day *of the Revelation of the righteous Judge-*

Ans.

Cap. 30.

Dan. 12.

ment of God; the righteous shall then shine as the *sunne* in the *firmament*, then Christ will come to be glorious in his Saints, and will be *the salvation of the countenance* of all his. Then all the works of darknesse shall be driven out of countenance, and adjudged to the place from whence they came. In the meane time let us (with *David*) support our selves with the hopes of these times.

C A P. X X X.

Of God, our God, and of particular application.

[*MY God.*]

That *David's* interest in God was a speciall foundation of his trusting in God.

These words imply a special interest that the holy man had in God, (*as his God*) being the ground of all which was said before; both of the duty of *trusting*, and of *praising*, and of the *salvation* that he expected from God. He *is my God*, therefore be not disquieted, but trust him. He *is my God*, therefore he will give me matter to praise him, and will be *the salvation of my countenance*; God hath some speciall ones in the world, to whom he

Cap. 30.

Ier. 31. 33.
2 Cor. 6. 18

he doth as it were passe over himself, and whose God he is by vertue of a more speciall covenant; whence we have these excellent expressions, *I will be your God, and you shall be my people: I will be your Father, and you shall be my sonnes and daughters.* Since the fall we having lost our communion with God the chief good, our happinesse stands in recovering again fellowship with him. For this end we were created, and for this redeemed, and for effecting of this, the Word and Sacraments are sanctified to us, yea, and for this end God himself (out of the bowels of his compassion) vouchsafed to enter into a gracious covenant with us, founded upon Jesus Christ, and his satisfaction to divine justice; so that by Faith we become one with him, and receive him, as offered of his Father to *be all in all to us.*

Hence it is, that CHRIST hath his name *Immanuell, God with us.* Not onely because he is *God*, and *man* too, (both natures meeting in one person) but because being God in our nature, he hath undertook this office to bring God and us together. The main end of Christs coming and suffering, was to reconcile, and

Why Christ
bath his
name Im-
manuel.

Cap 30.
1 Pet. 3. 18

Job. 20. 10.

Heb. 13.
Psa. 73. 26,
Mal. 3. 25.
Psal. 71.

vse.

to gather together in one; and (as *Peter* expresseth it) *to bring man again to God.* *Immanuel* is the bond of this happy agreement, and appeares for ever in heaven to make it good. As the comfort hereof is great, so the foundation of it is sure and everlasting. God will be our God, *so long* as he is Christs God; and *because* he is Christs God. Thus the Father of the faithfull, and all other holy men before Christ, apprehended God to be their God in the *Messias* to come. Christ was the ground of their interest. He was *yesterday* to them aswell as *to day* to us. Hence it is that God is called the *portion* of his people, and they his *jewels*: he their only *rock* and *strong Tower*, and they his peculiar ones.

Well may we wonder that the great God should stoope so low, to enter into such a covenant of grace and peace, founded upon such a Mediator, with such utter enemies, base creatures, sinfull dust and ashes as we are. This is the wonderment of Angels, a torment of devils, and glory of our nature and persons; and will be matter of admiration, and praising God unto us for all eternity.

As

Cap. 30.
That there
must be on
our part an
appropria-
ting of God
as he ren-
ders him-
selfe to be
our God.

As God offereth himselfe to be ours in Christ (else durst we lay no claime to him) so there must be in us an appropriating grace of *faith*, to lay hold of this offer. *David* saith here, *My God*. But by what spirit? by a spirit of *faith*, which looking to Gods offer, maketh it his own whatsoever it layes hold of. God offereth himself in covenant, and Faith catcheth hold thereon presently. With a gracious offer of God, there goeth a gracious touch of his Spirit to the soul, giving it sight and strength, whereby (being ayded by the same Spirit) it layeth hold on God shewing himselfe in love. God saith to the soul, *I am thy salvation*, and the soul saith again, *Thou art my God*. *Faith is nothing else but a spirituall echo, returning that voice back again, which God first speakes to the soul*. For what acquaintance could the soule claime with so glorious a Majesty, if he should not first condescend so low, as to speake peace, and whisper secretly to the soul, that he is *our* loving God and Father, and *we* his peculiar ones in Christ, that our sins are all pardoned, his justice fully satisfied, and our persons freely accepted in his deare Sonne?

Cap. 30.

But to come more particularly to the words [*My God.*] The words are pregnant; in the wombe of them, all that is graciously and comfortably good is contained; they are the spring-head of all particular blessings. All particular *Relations* and *Titles* that it pleaseth God to take upon him, have their strength from hence, that God is *our God*. More cannot be said, and lesse will not serve the turn. Whatsoever else we have, if we have not God, it will prove but an *empty Cistern* at last. He is our proper element, every thing desires to live in its own element, fishes in the Sea, Birds in the ayre; in this they are best preserved.

There is a greater strength in this [*My God*] than in any other Title, it is more than if he had said, *My King*, or *My Lord*, these are words of sovereignty and wisdom; but this implies not only infinite power, sovereignty, and wisdom, but likewise infinite *bounty* and provident care; so that when we are said to be *Gods people*, the meaning is, that we are not onely such over whom God hath a power and command, but such as towards whom hee shewes a *loving* and *peculiar respect*.

In

In the words is implied, 1. A propriety and interest in God, 2. An improvement of the same for the quieting of the soule.

David (here) layes a *particular* claim, by a *particular faith* unto God. The reason is, 1. The vertue of *faith* is as to lay hold, so to appropriate to it selfe, and make *its own* whatever it layes hold on, and it doth no more in this, then God gives it leave by his gracious promises to doe.

2 As God offers, so *faith* receives, but God offers himselfe in *particular* to the beleeving soule by his Spirit, therefore our faith must be particular. That which the Sacraments seale, is a *peculiar* interest in Christ. This is that which hath always upheld the Saints of God, and that which is ever joyned with the life of Christ in us. *The life that I live* (saith Paul) *is by the faith of the Sonne of God, who loved me, and gave himselfe for me.* The spirit of faith is a spirit of application.

This is implied in all the *Articles* of our faith; we beleeve God to be *our Father*, and Christ to be *borne for us*, that he *died* for us, and *rose again* for our good,

Cap. 30.

I.

2.

Particular
faith neces-
sary, and
why.

I.

2.

Gil. 2. 20,

Cap. 30.

and now sits at the right hand of God, making requests *for us* in particular.

3.

3 This is that which distinguisheth the faith of a true Christian from all hypocrites and cast-awayes whatsoever. Were it not for this word of possession [*Mine*] the devill might say the *Creed* to as good purpose as we; he beleeves there is a God, and a Christ; but that which torments him is this, he can say [*My*] to never an Article of Faith.

4.

Tolle meum
tolle Deum.

4 A generall apprehension of Gods goodnesse and mercy may stand with desperation. Take away *My* from God, and take away God himselfe in regard of comfort; what comfort was it for *Adam*, when he was shut out of Paradise, to look upon it after he had lost it? The more excellencies are in God, the more our griefe if we have not our part in them: the very life-blood of the Gospel, lyes in a speciall application of particular mercy to our selves. All relations that God and Christ have taken upon them, imply a necessity of application; What if God be a *rock* of salvation, if we doe not rest upon him? What if he be a *foundation*, and we doe not build on him? What if hee offers

offers himselfe as a husband, if we will not accept of him, what availes it us? How can we rejoyce in the salvation of our soules, unlesse we can in particular say, *I rejoyce in God my Saviour?*

5 Without particular application, we can neither entertain the love of God, nor return love again, by which meanes we lose all the comfort God intends us in his word, which of purpose was written for our solace and refreshment; Take away *particular faith*, and we let out all the spirits of cheerefull and thankfull obedience.

5.

This possessive particle [*My*] hath place in all the golden chaine of our salvation. The first spring of all Gods claim to us as his is in his *election* of us; we were by grace *his* before we were; those that are his from that *eternall love*, he *gives to Christ*; this is hid in the breast of God, till he *calls us* out of the rest of the world into communion with Christ. In answering of which call (by *faith*) we become one with Christ, and so one with him. Afterwards in *justification* we feel God experimentally to be reconciled unto us, whence arises joy and inward *peace*. And then

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then upon further *sanctification* God delights in us as *his*, bearing his *own* image, and we from a likenesse to God, delight in him as *ours* in his Christ, and so this mutuall interest betwixt God and us, continues untill at last God becomes *all in all* unto us.

Object.

But how can a man that is not yet in the state of grace say with any comfort, [My God?]

Answ.

Whilest a man *regards iniquity in his heart* without any remorse or dislike of the same, if he saith *My God*, his heart will give his tongue the lye, however in an outward profession, and opinion of others, he may beare himself as if God were *his*, upon false grounds. For there can be no more in a Conclusion, then it hath from the Principle and Premises out of which it is drawn. The *principle* (here) is, that God is the God of all that *trust in him*. Now if we can make it good, that wee truly trust in God, we may safely conclude of comfort from him; for the more certain clearing of which, try your selves by the signes of trust delivered.

It is no easie matter to say in truth of heart [*My God*] the flesh will still labour for

for supremacie, God should be *all in all* unto us, but this will not be till these bodies of flesh (together with the body of sin) be laid aside. He that sayes, God is [*My God,*] and doth not yeeld up himself unto God, raiseth a building without a foundation, layeth a *claim* without a *title*, and claimeth a *title* without an *evidence*, reckoning upon a bargain, without consent of the party with whom he would contract.

But if a man shall out of the sight and sense of sin, thirst after mercy in Christ, and call upon God for pardon, *then* God *who* (is a God *hearing prayer*, and) delighteth to be known by the name of *mercifull*, will be ready to close and meet with the desire of such a soul, so farre as to give it leave to relie upon him for mercy, (and that without presumption) untill he further discovers himselfe graciously unto it; upon sense of which grace, the Soul may be encouraged to lay a farther claim unto God, having further acquaintance with him. Hence are those exhortations so oft in the *Prophets*, to *turn unto the Lord our God*, because upon our *first* resolution to turn unto God, we shal find him always ready

Cap. 30.

ready to answer those desires, that hee stirres up by his owne Spirit in us.

We are not therefore to stay our turning unto God, till we feel him saying to our hearts, *I am thy God*, but when hee prevents us by his grace, inabling us to desire grace, let us follow the work begun, in the strength of what grace we have, and then God will further manifest himself in mercy to us.

Yet God before wee can make any thing towards him, letteth into our hearts some few beams of mercy thereby drawing us unto him, and reaching us out a hint to lay hold upon.

And as sin causeth a distance betwixt God and us, so the guilt of sin in the conscience, causeth further strangeness, inso-much that we dare not look up to heaven, till God open a little crevise to let in a little light of comfort (at least) into our souls, whereby we are by little and little drawn neerer to him. But this light at the first is so little, that in regard of the greater sense of *sin*, and a larger desire of *grace*, the soul reckons the same as no light at all, in comparison of what it desires and seeks after. Yet the comfort is, that this daw-
ning

ning light will at length cleere up to a perfect day.

Thus we see how this claim of God to be *our God*, is still in *growth* untill full assurance, and that there is a great distance betwixt the first *act* of faith in cleaving to God, offering himselfe in Christ to be *ours*, and between the *last fruit* of faith, the cleere and comfortable feeling, that God is *our God* indeed. We first by *faith* apply our selves to God, and then apply God to us, to be *ours*; The first is the conflicting *exercise* of faith, the last is the *triumph* of faith; therefore *faith* properly is not assurance. And to comfort us the more, the *promises* are specially made to the *act* of faith, fuller assurance is the *reward* of faith.

If God hath not chosen me in Christ to be his, what ground have I to trust in him? I may cast away my self upon a vain confidence.

We have no ground (at first) to trouble our selves about Gods *election*. Secret things belong to God; Gods revealed will is, *That all that beleeve in Christ shall not perish*. It is my duty therefore knowing *this*, to beleeve, by doing whereof, I put that question [*whether God be mine or no?*]

Object.

Answer.

Joh. 3. 15.

Cap. 30.

Quis pollicetur
serenti proventum,
naviganti portum,
militanti victoriam?
Ideo Navigantes
vitam ventis credunt
&c.
Silvian.
Idco terris
frumenta credimus ut
cum usuris credita re-
cipiamus.

no?] out of all question : for all that be-
leeve in Christ, are *Christs*, and all that
are *Christs* are *Gods*. It is not my du-
ty to look to Gods secret counsell, but to
his open offer, *invitation* and *command*,
and thereupon to adventure my soule.
And this adventure of *Faith* will bring
at length a rich return unto us. In warre
men wil adventure their lives, because they
think some will escape, and why not they?
In traffique beyond the Seas many adven-
ture great estates, because some grow rich
by a good return, though many miscarry.
The Husbandmand adventures his seed,
though sometime the yeare proves so bad,
that he never sees it more : And shall not
we make a spirituall adventure in casting
our selves upon God, when we have so
good a warrant as his *command*, and so
good an encouragement as his *promise*,
that he will not faile those that rely on
him? God bids us *draw neare to him*, and
he will *draw neare to us*. Whilest we in
Gods own ways draw neare to him, and
labour to entertain good thoughts of him,
he will delight to shew himselfe favour-
able unto us. Whilest we are striving a-
gainst an unbelieving heart, he will come
in

in and help us, and so fresh light will come in.

Pretend not thy unworthinesse and inabilityie, to keep thee off from God, for this is the way to keep thee so still; if any thing help us, it must be God; and if ever he help us, it must be by casting our selves upon him: for then he will reach out himselfe unto us in the promise of mercy to pardon our sin, and in the promise of grace to sanctifie our natures. It was a good resolution of the Lepers, *If we enter into the City, the famine is there, and we shall dye (say they;) if we sit still, we shall dye also: Let us therefore fall into the host of Assyrians, if they save us, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but dye;* So we should reason, if we sit still under the load of our sin, we shall dye; if wee put our selves into the hands of Christ, if he save us we shall live, if he save us not, we shall but dye. Nay surely, he will not suffer us to dye. Did ever Christ thrust any back from him, that put themselves upon him? Unlesse it were, by that meanes to draw them the nearer unto him, as we see in the *Woman of Canaan*. His deniall was but to increase her importunity.

We

2 Reg. 7. 4.

Omnia in rebus humanis spes futurorum agunt.

Cap. 30.

We should therefore do as she did, gather all arguments to help our faith. Suppose *I am a dogge* (saith shee) yet I am one of the family, and therefore have right to *the crummes that fall*. So Lord, I have been a sinner, yet I am thy creature, and not onely so, but such a creature as thou hast set over the rest of the works of thy hands, and not only so, but one whom thou hast admitted into thy Church by *Baptisme*, whereby thou wouldst bind me to give my selfe unto thee before-hand, and more than this, thou hast brought me under the means, and therein hast shewed thy will concerning my turning towards thee. Thou hast not onely offered mee conditions of peace, but wooed me by thy Ministers to give up my selfe unto thee, as thine in thy Christ. Therefore I dare not suspect thy good meaning towards me, or question thy intendment, but resolve to take thy counsell, and put my self upon thy mercy. I cannot think if thou hadst meant to cast me away, and not to own me for thine, thou wouldst ever have kindled these desires in me. But it is not this state I rest in, my purpose is to wait upon thee, untill thou dost manifest

manifest thy selfe further unto me: It is
not common favours that will content
me (though I be unworthy of these) be-
cause I heare of choise blessings towards
thy chosen people; that thou entrest into
a peculiar covenant withall; *sure mercies*,
and such as accompany salvation. These
be the favours I wait for at thy hand.
Visit me with the salvation of thy chosen.
O remember me with the favour of thy
people; that I may see *the good of thy cho-*
sen. Whilest the soul is thus exercised,
more sweetnesse falls upon the *will* and
affections; whereby they are drawn still
nearer unto God. The soul is in a getting
and a thriving condition; For God de-
lights to shew himselfe gracious to those
that strive to be well perswaded of him,
concerning his readinesse to shew mercy
to all that look towards him in Christ.
In wordly things, how doe we cherish
hopes upon little grounds: if there shineth
never so little hope of gain or preferment,
we make after it: Why then should we
forsake our own mercy, (which God
offers to be our own, if we will embrace
it) having such certain grounds for our
hope to rest on?

Cap. 10.

Esay 55.3.

Pl. 106.4,5

Cap. 39

1 Reg. 30.

33.

2. 2. 2. 13

2. 2. 2. 13

Esay 61. 3.

It was the policy of the servants of
 Menhadad to watch if any word of comfort
 fell from the King of Israel; and when he
 named Benhadad his steward, they stood
 presently at that, and cheered them-
 selves. *Psalm* hath a catching quality; at
 whatsoever is here today hold on. Like
 the branches of the vine it windeth about
 that which is next, and Rayes it self upon
 it; spreading further and further still.
 If *nature* taught Benhadads servants to
 lay hold upon any word of comfort that
 fell from the mouth of a cruel King.
 Shall not *grace* teach Gods children to be
 in wait for a token that he shall shew for
 good to them? How should we stretch
 forth the arms of our *Psalm* to him, that
 stretcheth out his arms all the day long to
 rebellious people? God will never shoo his
 bosome against those, that in unhumble
 obedience flye unto him: we cannot con-
 ceive too graciously of God. Can we
 have a fairer offer, than for God in Christ
 to make over himselfe unto us: which is
 more than if he should make over a thou-
 sand worlds. Therefore our chiefe care
 should be first by *faith* to make this good,
 and then to make it usefull unto us, by li-
 ving

ving upon it as our chiefest portion
which we shall see. 1. By proving God
to be our God in particular. 2. By impro-
ving of it in all the passages of our lives.

C A P. XXXI.

Means of proving and evidencing to our
souls, that God is our God.

NOW we prove it to our souls, that God
is ours, when we take him at his offer;
when we bring nothing but a sense of our
own emptinesse with us, and a good con-
fite of his faithfulness and ability to doe
us good. When we answer, God is the par-
ticular passages of salvation, which we
cannot do, till he begins first with us.
Therefore if we be Gods, it is a certain
sign that God is ours. If we chuse him,
we may conclude he hath chosen us first.
If we love him, we may know that he hath
loved us first. If we apprehend him, it is
because he hath apprehended us first.
Whatsoever affection we show to God,
it is but a reflexion of his first to us. If
cold and dark bodies have light and heat
in them, it is because the Sun hath shined
upon them first. *My loves are yours, O Lord,*
till

1. Cor. 13. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

1.

1. Cor. 4. 19.

1. Cor. 13. 14.

1. Cor. 13. 16.

Capit. 1.
Dicit ami-
ma, *secura*
dicat, *Dens*
mens *erit*,
quis dicit a-
nima nostra
Salus tua
ego sum.
Aug. in
Psal. 132.
Cant. 6.3.

2.

Psal. 63.1,
2, 3, &c.

2. Cor. 10.1

Christ said *Mary* to her. If we say to God, I am thine, it is because he hath first said unto us, Thou art mine; after which, the voice of the faithfull soul is, *I am my beloveds, and my beloved is mine.*

We may know Gods minde to us in heaven, by the return of our hearts upwards again to him: Only as the reflected beames are weaker than the direct, so our affections in their return to God are farre weaker than his love falling upon us. God will be to us whatsoever we make him by our *faith* to be; when by grace we answer his condition of *trusting*, then he becomes ours to use for our good.

2. We may know God to be [*our God*] when we pitch and plant all our happinesse in him, when the desires of our souls are towards him, and we place all our contentment in him. As this word [*my*] is a terme of *appropriation* springing from a speciall faith, so it is a word of *love* and peculiar *affection*, shewing that the soul doth repose and rest it selfe quietly and securely upon God. Thus *David* proves God to be *his God*, by *early seeking of him*, by *thirsting*, and *longing after his presence*, and that upon good reason, *because*

Cap. 11.

Phil. 3. 8.

because Gods loving kindnesse was better to him than life; Thus he knew would satisfy his soul as with marrow and fatnesse. So St. Paul proved Christ to be his Lord, by accounting all things else as dung and drosse in comparison of him.

Then we make God our God, and set a Crown of Majesty upon his head, when we set up a Throne for him in our hearts, where self-love before had set up the creature above him; when the heart is so unloosed from the world, that it is ready to part with any thing for Gods sake, giving him now the supremacy in our hearts, and bringing down every high thought, in captivity to him; making him our trust, our love, our joy, our delight, our feare, our all, and whatsoever we esteeme or affect else, to esteeme and affect it under him, in him, and for him; When we cleave to him above all, depending upon him as our chiefe good, and contenting our selves in him, as al-sufficient to give our souls fit and full satisfaction. When we resign up our selves to his gracious government, to do and suffer what he will, offering our selves and all our spirituall services as sacrifices to him. When faith brings God

Cap. 31.

84. links

Amor tuus,
Deus tuus,

3.

Exod. 30.

Nemini sit
injuria cui
proponitur
Deus.

into the soul as *love*, we not only love
him, but love him *dearly*, making it ap-
peare, that we are at good teaching with
God; we are at a point for other things.
How many are there that will adventure
the losse of the love of God, for a thing
of nothing, and redeeme the favour of
men with the losse of Gods? Certain it is
whatsoever we esteem, or affect most,
that whatsoever it be in it selfe, yet we
make it but God. The best of us all may
take blame to our selves hereby, in that we
do not give God his due place in us; but
set up some *will* or other in our hearts
above him.

When the soul can without hypocrisie
say, *My God*, it engageth us to universall
and unlimited obedience; we shall be
ambitious of doing that which may be
acceptable and well pleasing to him; and
therefore this is preferred as a ground be-
fore the *Commandment*, enforcing obe-
dience. *I am the Lord thy God*, therefore
thou shalt have no other Gods before me;
whomsoever else we worship, it must be done
because we see a beam of Gods
authority in them; and it is no prejudice
to any other authority, to worship
Gods

Gods authority, becometh, in case of difference one from the other, word for word.

Cap. 14

Which we know we are peculiar people, we cannot but be zealous of good works.

Tit. 2. 14

Isaiah 2. 1. *For the Lord will be gracious to him that is zealous of good works.*

Mal. 1. 6.

Speciall relations are speciall enforced means to duty.

4.

4. The Spirit of God which knowes the deep things of God, and the depths of our hearts, doth reveale the mutuall interest betwixt God, and those that are

in, in being a principall worke of the Spirit to seale this unto the soul, by discovering such a cleare and particular light

in the use of means, as sweeten the soules to yield up in selfe wholly to God.

2. Cor. 13. 14

When we truly trust, we may say with

S. Paul, *Whom I have trusted*; he knew both *what* he trusted, and *whom* he

1. Tim. 1. 12

trusted. The spirit of God then reveales God to be true, and stirs up faith to

him, both reveales this trust to our soules, and the interest we have in God thereby.

The Lord is my portion, faith my soul: but God said for a gift. If instinct of nature

Lam. 3. 24

teaches, *as I knowe* their young ones, and *their sinners* them in the

middle of those that are alike, I shall not

lose them.

Cap. 15.

Rom. 8. 14

Rom. 8. 14

A

Rom. 8. 14

Mat. 11. 25

5. 17

49. 2. 1

the Spirit of God much more teach the soule to know its new father. As none knowes what is in man, but the spirit of man; so none knowes what love God beares to those that are his, but the Spirit of God in his. All the light in the world cannot discover the Sunne unto us; only it discovers it self by its own beams. So all the Angels and Saints in heaven cannot discover to our souls the love that is in the breast of God towards us; but onely the Spirit of God, which sheds it in our hearts. The Spirit only teaches this language, My God. It is infused onely into sanctified hearts; and therefore oft times makes men enjoy it, when great, wise and learned persons are strangers to it.

5. The Spirit when it witnesseth this to us, is called the Spirit of Adoption, and hath alwayes accompanying of it a spirit of supplication; whereby, with a familiar, yet reverend boldnesse, we lay open our hearts to God as to a deare Father; All others are strangers to this heavenly intercourse. In straits they runne to their friends and carnall shifts, whereas an heire of heaven runs to his Father, and tells him of all.

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4 2 6

6 Those

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 11.

6.

Speciall fa-
vours shew
God to be
our God.

1.

4.

2.

Tom. 8. 14.

7.

Re. 2. 2.

3.

of

6. Those that are Gods, are known to be his by speciall love-tokens that he be-
stowes upon them. As 1. the speciall
graces of his Spirit. Princes children are
known by their costly Jewels, and rich
ornaments. It is not common gifts, and
glorious parts that set a character upon us
to be Gods, but grace to use those gifts,
in humility and love, to the glory of the
giver.

2. There is in them a suitablenesse and
unnaturalnesse of heart to all that is spi-
rituall, to whatsoever hath Gods Stamp
upon it, as his *truth* and his *children*, and
that because they are *his*. By this like-
nesse of disposition, we are fashioned to a
communion with him: Can two walk to-
gether and not be agreed? It is a certain
evidence, that we are Gods in Christ, if
the Spirit of God hath wrought in us any
impression like unto Christ, who is the
image of his Father, both Christ look-
ing upon us, and our looking upon Christ
by faith (as ours) hath a transforming and
conforming power.

3. Spirituall comforts in distress, such
as the world can neither give, nor take a-
way, shew that God looks upon the soules
of

Canto

.d

of his owne
will and
of his owne
hoD me

.I

4.

.2

Rom. 8. 28.

7.

1 Reg. 9. 33

of his owne another eye, than he behol-
deth others. He sends a *secret* messenger
that reports his *peculiar* love to their
hearts. He knows *their souls*, and feeds
them with his *hidden Manna*, the inward
peace they seek, is not in freedom from
trouble, but in fellowship with God in the
midst of trouble.

4. Seasonable and sanctified corrections
whereby we are kept from being led away
by the error of the wicked. shew Gods
fatherly care over us as *Isa.* Who will
trouble himselfe in correcting another
mans child? yet we oftner complaine of
the smart we feel, than think of the tender
heart and hand that smites us, untill our
spirits be subdued; and then we reap the
quiet fruit of righteousness. When
crosses *work together for the best*, we may
know *that we love God*, and are loved of
him. Thriving in a sinfull course, is a black
mark off one that is not God.

7. Then we make it appeare that God
is our God, when we side with him, and
are for him and his cause in all times. When
God seems to cry out unto us, *Heb. 12.*
My son, obey. Then if we can say as *Isa.*
an I say, whereof one sayes, *I am the Lord*,
and

And he telleth himself by the name of
 good, and another subscribeth with the
 name of evil. Let that be a blessed signe
 thus the Patriarches and Prophets, A-
 braham, and Maryams, were not ashamed
 of God, and God was not ashamed to
 count them. Provided that this boldnesse
 for God proceed not only from a con-
 fidence of the judgement, but from spiritu-
 all experience of the goodness of the
 cause, whereby we can justifie in heart
 what we justifie in words. Otherwise
 we may contend for that with others,
 which they have no interest in themselves.
 The life must witness for God, as well
 as the tongue: it is by a chafier for corrupt
 man to part with life rather than with
 life in sin.

This siding with God, is with a sepa-
 ration from whatsoever is contrary. God
 hath his as an argument to come out of
 Babylon, because we are his people. Come
 out of Babylon my people. Religion is nothing
 else but a gathering and a binding of the
 Soules to God, that fire which giveth
 light and heat, the good, separates the
 good from the evil, and sets the con-
 trary.

Gen.
 Ely. 44. 6.

Heb. 11. 16

Rev. 18. 4.

Cant.

3. 17.

3. 17.

Mal. 3. 17.

3. 17.

mary. The good that is to be had by God is by cleaving to him, and him *only*. God loves an ingenuous and full protestation if called to it. It shewes the coldnesse of the times when there is not heart enough of zeale to separate from a contrary faith. God is a jealous God, and so we shall find him at last. When the day of severing comes, then they that have stood for him, shall not only be *his*, but his *treasures*, and his *jewels*.

There is none of us all, but may some time or other fall into such a great extremity, that when we looke about us, we shall find none to help us: at which time we shall thoroughly know, what it is to have comfort from heaven, and a God to go unto. If there be any thing in the world worth labouring for, it is the getting sound evidence to our souls that God is ours. What madnesse is it to spend all our labour, to possesse our selves of the *Cistern*, when the *fountain* is offered to us: O beloved, the whole world cannot weigh against this *one comfort*, that God is ours. All things laid in the other balance, would be too light. A *Moth* may corrupt, a *thief* may take away that we have

8457

Cap. 11.

David

The Soules Conflict.

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Cap. 3.
Phil. 4. 19

God (saith S^c Paul) will supply all your wants.
If in my danger, I am thine Lord, liue me,
for anything, the price of thy S^cns blood,
let me not be lost, thou hast given me the
bargain of thy Spirit, and for thy seal up-
on me for thy own, let me neither lo-
se my bargain, nor thou thine. What is
deligion it selfe but a spirituall bond,
whereby the soul is tyed to God as its
own, and then singles out of God what-
soever is needfull for any occasion: and
so binds God with his own covenant and
promise. Lord thou hast made thy selfe to be
comely, therefore now thou thy self so, and be-
lieued in thy wisdom, goodness, and power,
for my defence. To walke comfortably in my
Christ sanctified, I need much grace, supply
me out of thy rich store. I need wisdom to
be stand out confidently before others, sur-
passed with thy Spirit. I need patience and
perseverance, when thou art the God of all conso-
lation, be thou in on me.

2. Cor. 12.

1. Cor. 12.

In time of desertion put Christ betwixt
God and thy soul, and learn to appeal
from God via of Christ, to God in Christ.
Lord look upon my Saviour, that is neare
unto thee as thy Sonne, neare to me as my
Brother, and now intercedes at thy right
hand

Eph. 2.

2. 1. 11. 12.

hand for me; though I have sinned, yet he hath suffered, and shed his precious blood to make my peace. When we are in any trouble, let us still wait on him, and lye at his feet, and never let him go, till he cast a gracious look upon us.

So if we be to deal with God, for the Church abroad, we may alleadge unto him, that whatsoever provocations are therein, and deformity in regard of abuses and scandals: yet it is his Church, his people, his inheritance, his name is called upon in it, and the enemies of it are his enemies. God hath engaged himself to the friends of the Church, that they shall prosper that love it, and therefore we may with a holy boldnesse presse him for a blessing upon the same.

Pla. 122. 6

So for our Children and posterity, we may encline God to respect them, because they are under his Covenant, who hath promised to be our God, and the God of our Seed: *Thine they were, thou gavest them me: all that I have is thine, these are thine children which thou of thy rich grace hast given me. They are thine, more than mine. I am but a meane under thee to bring them into the world, and so be a Nurse unto thy children.*

John 17.

children. Take care therefore of thine own children. I beseech thee, (especially) when I am taken care of them my self, thou sleepest not, thou dyest not, I must.

Flesh and blood think nothing is cared for, but what it seeth cared for by it self. It hath no eyes to see a guard of Providence, a guard of Angels. It takes no knowledge that that is best cared for, that God cares for. Those that have God for their God, have enlarged hearts as they have enlarged comforts. They have an everlasting spring that supplies them in all wants, refreshes them in all troubles, and then runnes most clearly and freshly, when all other streames in the world are dried and stopt up. Were we skilfull in the art of faith, to improve so great an interest, what in the world could much dismay us? faith will set God against all.

It should fill our hearts with all holy indignation against our selves, if either we rest in a condition, wherein we cannot truly say God is [Our God] or (if when we can in some sincerity of heart say this) that we make no better advantage thereby, and maintain not our selves answerable

Cap. 3.

able to such a condition. What a shame is it for a Noble mans sonne to live like a begger? for a great rich man to live like a poore peasant? to famish at a banquet to fall when we have so many staves to lay hold on? Whereas if we could make this cleare to our souls, that *God is ours*, and then take up our thoughts with the great riches we have in *him*, laid open in Christ, and in the promises, wee need trouble our selves about nothing, but only get a large vessell of *faith*, to receive what is offered, nay enforced upon us.

When we can say, *God is our God*, it is more than if we could say, Heaven is mine, or whatever good the creature affords, is mine. Alas, what is all this, to be able to say, *God is mine*, who hath in him the sweetnesse of all these things, and infinite more? If God be *ours*, goodnesse it selfe is *ours*. If he be not *ours*, though we had all things else, yet ere long nothing would be *ours*. What a wondrous comfort is this, that God hath put himselfe over to be *ours*. That a beleeving soule may say with as great confidence (and greater too) that *God is his*, then he can say his house is his, his treasure is his, his friends

friends are his? Nothing is so much *ours* as God is ours, because by his being ours in covenant, all other things become *ours*: And if God be once *ours*, well may wee trust in him. God and *ours* joyned together, make up the full comfort of a Christian. [God] there is all to be had; but what is that to me, unlesse he be my God? All-sufficiency with propriety, fully stayeth the soule.

David was now banished from the Sanctuary, from his friends, habitation, and former comforts; but was he banished from his God? No, God was his God still. When riches, and friends, and life it selfe cease to be *ours*, yet God never loseth his right in us, nor we our interest in him. This comfort that God is *ours*, reacheth unto the resurrection of our bodies, and to life everlasting. God is the God of Abraham, (and so of every true believer) even when his body is turned into dust. Hence it is that the loving kindnesse of the Lord is better than life, because when life departs, yet we live for ever in him. When Moses saw the people drop away so fast in the wilderness, and wither like grass, Then say our foundation (saith he) from one generation

Cap. 32

generation to another: thou art God from everlasting to everlasting. When we leave the world, and are no more seen here, yet we have a dwelling place in God for ever. God is ours from everlasting in *election*, and to everlasting in *glory*, protecting us here, and glorifying us hereafter. *David* that claimed God to be *his God* is gone, but *David's God* is alive. And *David* himselfe (though his flesh see corruption, yet) is alive in his God still.

That which is said of wily persons that are full of fetches, and windings, and turnings in the world, that such will never breake, may much more truly be said of a right godly man, that hath but one grand policy, to secure him in all dangers, which is to runne to his God, as to his tower of offence and defence: such a one will never be at a desperate losse so long as God hath any credit, because he never faileth those that fly unto him, and that because his mercy and truth never failes. The very *lame* and the *blind*, the most shiftlesse creatures when they had gotten the *strong hold of Sion*, thought then they might securely scorn *David* and *his host*, because though they were weak in themselves,

2 Sam. 5.
6, 7.

selves, yet their *hold* was strong; but wee see their hold failed them at length, which Christians will never doe.

But God seems to have *small* care of those that are his in the world, those who beleeve themselves to be his jewels, are counted the off-scouring of the world, & most despised.

We must know that such have a glorious life in God, but it is *hidden with Christ in God*, from the eyes of the world, and sometimes from their *owne*; here they are hidden under infirmities, afflictions, and disgraces, but yet never so hidden, but that God sometimes lets downe a beame of comfort and strength, which they would not lose to be freed from their present condition, though never so grievous. God comes more immediately to them now, than formerly he was used; nay, even when God seems to forsake them (and to be their enemy) yet they are supported with such inward strength, that they are able to make good their claim with Christ their head, and cry *My God still*; God never so departs, but he always leaves somewhat behind him, which draws & keepes the heart to him. We are like poor *Hagar*, who when the *bottle of water* was spent, *fel*

Cap. 32.

Object.

Ans.
Coloss. 3.

Ge. 21. 19

Cap. 32.

a crying, when there was a fountaine close by, but her tears hindered her from seeing it; When things goe ill with us in our trades and callings, and all is spent, *then* our spirits droope, and we are at our wits end, as if God were not where he was. Oh consider, if we had all and had not God, we had nothing: If we have nothing, and have God, we have enough, for we have him that hath all, and more than al at his command. If we had all other comforts that our hearts can desire, yet if God withdraw himselfe, what remains but a curse and emptinesse? What makes *heaven* but the presence of God? And what makes *hell* but the absence of God? Let God be in any condition, though never so ill, yet it is comfortable, and usually we find more of God *in* trouble, than when we are *aw* of trouble; the comforts of Religion never come till other faile. Cordials are kept for faintings. When a curtaine and a vaile is drawne betwixt us and the creature, then our eyes are onely upward to God, and he is more clearly seen of us.

In the division of things, God bequeathes him selfe to those that are *his*, for their portion, as the best portion he can give them

God, the
Saines
portion.

Cap. 32.

them. There are many goodly things in the world, but none of these are a Christians portion, there is in him to supply all good, and remove all ill, untill the time come that we stand in need of no other good. It is our chief *wisdom* to know him, our *holinesse* to love him, our *happinesse* to enjoy him. There is in him to be had, what soever can truly make us happy. We goe to our *treasure*, and our *portion* in all our wants, we live by it, and value our selves by it. God is such a portion, that the more we spend on him, the more we may. *Our strength may faile, and our heart may faile,* but *God is our portion for ever.* Every thing else teaches us by the vanity and vexation we find in them, that our happiness is not in them, they send us to God; they may make us worse, but better they cannot. Our nature is above them, and ordained for a greater good; they can goe but along with us for a while, & their end swallowes up all the comfort of their beginning, as *Pharaohs* leane Kine swallowed up the fat. If we have no better portio here than these things, we are like to have hell for our portio hereafter. What a shame wil it be hereafter when we are stript of al that

Psal. 73. 26

Cap. 32.

1 Reg. 17.
14.

it should be said, Loe this is the man that took not God for his portion. If God be once ours, he goes for ever along with us, and when earth will hold us no longer heaven shal. Who, that hath his senses about him, would perish for want of water, when there is a fountaine by him? or for hunger, that is at a feast? God alone is a rich portion. O then let us labour for a large faith, as we have a large object; If we had a thousand times more faith, we should have a thousand times more increase of Gods blessings. When the Prophet came to the *widows house*, as many vessels as she had *were filled with oyle*; we are straitned in our own faith, but not straitned in our God. It fals out oft in this world that Gods people are like *Israel* at the red sea, invironed with dangers on all sides: What course have we then to take, but only to look up and wait for the salvation of our God? This is a *braust* full of *consolation*, let us teach our hearts to suck, and draw comfort from hence.

Is God *our* God; and will he suffer any thing to befall us for our hurt? Will he lay any more upon us, than he gives us strength to beare? Will he suffer any wind to blow upon us, but for good? Doth he not set

us

as before his face: Will a Father or Mother suffer a child to be wronged in their presence, if they can help it? Will a friend suffer his friend to be injured, if he may redresse him? And will God that hath put these affections into parents and friends, neglect the care of those he hath taken so neere unto himselfe? No surely, his eyes are open to look upon their condition, his eares are open to their prayers; a *book of remembrance* is written of all their good desires, speeches, and actions; he hath *bottles* for all their teares, their very *sighs* are not *hid from him*; he hath written them upon the *palmes* of his hands, and cannot but continually look upon them. Oh let us prize the favour of so good a God, who though he dwells *on high*, yet will regard things *so low*, and not neglect the meane estate of any; Nay, especially, delights to be called the *comforter of his Elect*, and the God of those that are in misery, and have none to flye unto but himselfe.

Mal. 3.16.

Isay 46.16

But we must know that God *onely* thus graciously visits his own *children*, he visits with his choicest favours those onely that *fear* his Name. As for those that
either

Cor. 3. 1

Judg. 10. 14

A. 16. 17

either secretly undermine, or openly oppose the cause, and Church of God, and joyne with his enemies, such as favour not the things of God, but commit spirittuall Idolatry, and Adultery with Gods enemies, the world, and the devil, God will answer these, as once he did the *Israelites*, (when in their necessity they would have forced acquaintance upon him) *Go to the Gods whom you have served, to the great men whose persons you have obeyed for advantage: to your rites, to your pleasures, which you have loved more than God or goodnesse: you would not lose a bafe custome, an oath, a feast day, a thing of nothing for mee, therefore I will not own you now.* Such men are more impudent than the devil himself, that will claim acquaintance with God at last, when they have carried themselves as his enemies all their dayes. *Susan* could tell *Paul* and *Silas*, they were the servants of the living God, but he would not make that plea for himselfe, knowing that he was a cursed creature.

Miserable then is their condition who live in the world, (nay in the Church) without God. Such are in a worse estate than

than *Pagans* and *Jewes*, for living in the house of God, they are *strangers* from God, and from the *covenant of grace*, misusing the name of *Christians*, having indeed nothing to do with *Christ*.

Some of these like spiritual vagabonds, as *Cain*, excommunicate themselves from Gods presence in the use of the *meanes*, or rather like *devils*, that will have nothing to doe with God, because they are loath to be tormented before their time, they think every good Sermon, an arraignment of them, and therefore keep out of reach.

Others will present themselves under the *maun*, and carry some savour away with them of what they heare, but it is onely till they meet with the next temptation, unto which they yeeld themselves presently slaves.

These shrowd themselves under a generall profession, as they did, who called themselves *Jewes*, and were nothing lesse. But alas, an empty title, will bring an empty comfort at last. It was cold comfort to the rich man in flames, that *Abraham* called him *sonne*. Or to *Judas*, that *Christ* called him *friend*. Or to the rebellious *Jewes*, that God styles them *his people*. Such as our profession

Luke 16.

Cap. 32.

*Quod cor
non facit
non fit.*

Psal. 50.

1 Sam. 28.
15.

feſſion is ſuch wil our comfort be. True profeſſion of Religion is another thing than moſt men take it to be; it is made up of the outward duty, and the inward man too; which is indeed the life & ſoul of all. What the heart doth not in Religion, is not done.

God cares for no Retainers, that wil only weare his livery, but ſerve themſelves. *What haſt thou to doe, to take his name into thy mouth, and baſeſt to be reformed? Saul* lived in the boſome of the Church, yet (being a cruell Tyrant) when he was in a deſperate plunge, his outward profeſſion did him no good. And therefore when he was invironed with his enemies; he uttered this dolefull complaint, *God hath forſaken me, and the Philiftims are upon mee.* A pitifull caſe; yet ſo will it be with all thoſe that reſt in an outward profeſſion, thinking it enough to complement with God, when their hearts are not right within them. Such will at length be forced to cry, *Sickneſſe is upon mee, death is upon me, hell is before me, and God hath forſaken mee.* I would none of God heretofore, *Now* God will have none of me. When *David* himſelfe had offended God
by

by numbring the people, then God counted him but plaine *David*, *Goe and say to David, &c.* whereas before when he purposed to build a *Temple*, then *Goe tell my servant David*. When the *Israelites* had set up an *Idoll*, then God fathers them on *Moses*, *Thy people which thou hast brought out of Egypt*: he would not owne them as at other times, then; *they are MY people* still whilest they keep covenant. No care, no present comfort in this neere relation.

The price of the *Pearl* is not known till all else be sold, and wee see the necessary use of it. So the worth of God in *Christ* is never discerned, till wee see our lost and undone condition without him, till conscience flies in our faces, and dragges us to the brink of hell; then if ever we taste how good the *Lord* is, wee will say, *Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord*. Heretofore I have heard of his loving kindnesse, but that is not a thousand part of what I see and feele. The joy I now apprehend is unutterable, *unconceivable*.

Oh then when we have gotten our souls possesse of God, let our study be, to preserve our selves in his love, to walke close with him, that he may delight to abide with

Cap. 30.
2 Sam. 24.
12.

2 Sam. 7.5

Exod. 32.7

Cap: 37.

Hs. 40. 15.

What pre-
serves the
sense of
Gods fa-
vour.

with us, and never forsake us. How basely doth the *Scripture* speak of whatsoever stands in our waye it makes nothing of them. What is *man* but *vanity*, and *lesse* than *vanity*? *All Nations* but as a drop of the bucket, as the dust of a ballance; things not at all considerable. *Flesh* looks upon them as through a multiplying glasse, making them greater than they are; but *faith* (as God doth) sees them as nothing.

This is such a blessed condixion, as may well challenge all our diligence in labouring to be assur'd of it; neither is it to be attained or maintained without the strength and prime of our care. I speake especially of, and in regard of the sense and comfort of it. For the sense of Gods favour will not be kept without keeping him in our best affections above all things in the world, without keeping of our hearts alwayes close and neere to him. which cannot bee without keeping a most narrow watch over our loose and unsetled hearts, that are ready to stray from God, and fall to the creature. It cannot be kept without exact & circumspect walking, without constant self-denial, without a continual preparation of spirit, to want and forsake any thing

Cap. 36.

Our pains
cannot bee
spent to
better pur-
pose than
in crossing
of our
selves for
God.

thing that God seeth fit to take from us.

But what of all this? Can we crosse our selves, or spend our labours to better purpose? one sweet beame of Gods countenance will requite all this. We beat not the ayre, we plow not in the sand, neither sow in a barren soile, God is no barren wilderness. Nay, he never shewes so much of *himselfe*, as in suffering, and parting with any thing for him, and denying our selves of *that*, which we think stands not with his will. Great persons require great observance. We can deny our selves, and have mens persons in great admiration, for hope of some advantage; and is any more willing and more able to advance us than the great Al-sufficient God? A Christian indeed, undergoes more troubles, takes more paines (especially with his own heart) than others do. But what are these to his gaires? What return so rich, as trading with God? What comforts so great, as these that are fetched from the fountain? One day spent in enjoying the light of Gods countenance, is sweeter than a thousand without it. We see here, when David was not only shut out from all comforts, but lay

Cap. 33.

lay under many grievances, what a fruitfull use he makes of this, that God was his God. It upholdeth his dejected, it filleth his unquiet soul: it leadeth him to the rock that was higher than he, and there stayeth him: It filleth him with comfortable hopes of better times to come. It sets him above himselfe, and all troubles and feares whatsoever.

Therefore wait still in the use of *means* till God shine upon thee; yea though we know our sins in Christ are pardoned, yet there is something more that a gracious heart waits for, that is a good look from God, a further enlargement of heart, and an *establishing* in grace. It was not enough for *David* to have his sinnes pardoned, but to *recover the joy of salvation*, and *freedom of spirits*. Therefore the soul should alwayes be in a waiting condition, even untill it bee filled with the fulnesse of God, as much as it is capable of. Neither is it quiet alone, or comfort alone, that the soul longs after, no, nor the favour of God *alone*, but a gracious heart to walke worthy of God. It rests not whilst any thing remaines, that may breed the least strangenesse betwixt God and us.

CAP.

CAP.

Pfal. 51.

of experience, and faith, and how to wait
on God comfortably. Helps thereto.

My soul. These words further imply a speciall
experience, that Dauid's soule had felt
of the goodnesse of God, he had found
God distilling the comfort of his good-
nesse and truth through the promises,
and he knew he should find God again
the same he was, if he put him in mind of
his former gracious dealing. His soul
knew right well, how good God was, and
he could scale to those truths he had
found comfort by. Therefore he thus
speakes to his soul, *My soul*, what *my
soul*, that hast found God so good, so oft,
so many wayes, thou *My soul* to be dis-
couraged, having God, and *My God*, with
whom I have taken so much sweet coun-
sell, and felt so much comfort from, and
found alwayes heretofore to stick so
close unto me? Why shouldst thou now
bee in such a case, as if God and thou had
bee strangers, one to another? If wee
could treasure up experiments, the former
I i part

ed of he d
best
on again
by the way

Ch. 13

God to be
trusted,
though ne-
ver tried.

part of our life would come in to help the latter, and the longer we live, the richer in *faith* we should be. Even as in victories every former overthrow of an enemy, help to obtain a succeeding victory. The use of a sanctified memory, is to lose nothing that may help in time of need. We had need be a well tryed, and a known friend, upon whom we lay all our salvation and comfort.

We ought to trust God upon *other* grounds, though we had never tryed him: but when he helps our *faith* by former *experience*, this should strengthen our confidence, and shore up our spirits, & put us on to go more cheerefully to God, as to a tried friend. If we were well read in the story of our own lives, we might have a *discovery* of our own, drawn out of the observation of Gods particular dealing towards us; we might say *This* and *this* *truth*, I dare venture upon, I have found it true, I dare build all my happiness upon it. As *Paul*, I know whom I have trust-
ed, I have tryed him. He never yet failed me, I am not *how* to learn how faithfull he is to those that are *his*. Every new experience is a new knowledge of God, and
should

should fit us for new encounters. If we have been good in former times, God remembers the kindness of our youth; we should therefore remember the kindness of God even from our youth. Evidence of what we have felt helps our faith in that, which for the present we feel not.

Though it be one thing to live by faith, and another thing to live by sight, yet the more we see, and feel, and taste of God, the more we shall be led to rely on him, for that which as yet we neither see nor feel. *Because thou hast been my helper* (saith David) *therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.* The same was Lord, when thou stretchedst thy self a gracious Father to me; and thou art unchangeable in thy nature, in thy love, and in thy gifts.

Yes, when there is no present evidence, but God shewes himselfe as contrary to us, yet a former taste of Gods goodness will enable us to lay claim unto him still. Gods concealing of himselfe is but a wise discipline for a time, untill we be enabled to have the full revealing of himselfe to us for ever. In the meantime, though we have some sight and feeling of God,

Cap. 33

c. 33

yet our constant living is not by visible
evidence of that we see nor, is that which
more constantly upholds the soule, than
the evidence of any thing we see or feel.

iv Yea, though our experience by reason
of our not minding of it in trouble, seems
many times to stand us in no stead, but
we fare as if God had never looked in
mercy upon us: Yet (even here) some
vertue remains of former sense, which
with the present spirit of faith, helps us
to look upon God as *within*. As we have
a present strength from food received,
and digested before, vessels are something
the better for that liquor they keep not,
but runs through them.

Faith alone
a sufficient
support.

* Cum om-
nium incer-
tum sit even-
tus, ad ea
accedimus
de quibus
non per-
dum esse
credimus.
Sen.

But if experience should wholly fail,
there is such a divine power in faith, as
very little beams of it, having no other
help, than a *simpled promise*, will uphold
the soule; howsoever we trust neglect no
help, for God oft suspends his comfort,
till we have searched all our helps. Though
we see *no light*, yet we ought to search
all cravises for light, and joye therein, that
least beams of light, that yet may see day
by night. It is the nature of true faith, to search
and pry into every corner, and if after

all, nothing appeares, then it casts it selfe
upon God, as in the first conversion, when
it had nothing to look upon but the offer
of free mercy. If at that time without
former experience, we did trust him, why
now, when we have forgotten our
experience? The chiefe ground of
trusting God, is that alwayes in the same,
whether we be feeling or not, why though
for the present we feel the contrary,
yet he will never leave wrestling, till in both
good and blessing. When first he is driven
to weeping, having nothing but God,
and his bare promise to rely upon, then
God shines it lies upon his creature, how
himselfe is a God himselfe. Gods power
in coming light, our darkness is never
more painful, then when a guilty soul is
lifted up by God to look for mercy, even
when he seemes naked with justice, to
renew his grace upon him, when the
soul is brought to a new conformity
with Christ, when he had the
guilt of the whole world upon
himselfe when he was forsaken, and that
when he had enjoyed the sweetest com-
munion with his Father, that ever creature
could do, and not only so, but he felt
the

The con-
formity of
the soul to
Christ.

1.

2.

3.

Cap. 49.

4.

the weight of Gods just displeasure against sin; and 4. was abased lower than ever any creature was; yet still he held fast God; as *his God*. In earthly matters, if we have a Title to any thing by gift, contract, inheritance, or howsoever, we will not be wrangled out of our right. And shall we not maintain our right in God, against all the tricks and cavils of Satan, and our own heart? We might labour to have something, that we may show that we are within the covenant. If he be never so little caught into the covenant, we are safe. And herein lies the special comfort of sanctity; that though he grant but little, yet it is of the right stuff; and shows that that we are servants; and surely though unworthy to be so. Here a little crumb will God fit. Hence it is that the Saints in all their afflictions, still all goe something; that shows that they are within the covenant. We are thy children, thy people, and thy servants. God is mindful of his covenant; but is well pleased, that we should mind him of it too, and mind our selves to make use of it. David doeth here. He knoweth he could bring his foules in

the court
to worship
the Lord
Christ

I.

2.

3.

100

11

11

his God, all would bee quiet.
 God is so ready to mercy, that he do
 delight in it, and delighteth in Christ,
 through whom he may shew mercy not-
 withstanding his justice, as being fully sa-
 tisfied in Christ. *Mercy* is his name that
 he will be known by. It is his *glory* which
 we behold in the face of Christ, who is
 nothing but grace and mercy it self. Nay,
 he pleads reasons for mercy, even from
 the sinfulness and misery of his creature;
 and maintains his *own mercy* against all
 the wrangling devils of flesh and blood,
 that would put mercy from them; and
 makes more willingly to *show* ob-
 jections, than God arguments. All it
 longeth God labours their spirit to faine,
 as they become ashamed for standing out
 so long against him. How ready will
 God be to shew mercy to us when wee
 put it, that thus presseth upon us, when
 we seem to refuse it? If God should take
 advantage of our waywardness, what
 would become of us? Surely counsel is
 to discourage those that God would have
 encouraged, and to encourage those
 whom God never speaks peace unto; and
 he thinks to gain both wayes. Our care

Cap. 11

therefore should be, when we resolve up
on Gods wayes, to labour that no dis-
couragement fallen upon us, seeing God
and his Word speak all comfort to us.

And because the best of a Christian is
to come, we should raise up our spirits
to wait upon God, for that mercy which
is yet to come. All inferior waitings
for good things here, doe but train us up
in the comfortable expectation of the
maine.

Waiting
difficult.

1.

This waiting on God, requires a great
strength of grace, by reason not only
of the excellency of the things waited for,

2.

(which are farre beyond any thing we can
hope for in the world.) But 2. in regard

3.

of the long time which God takes before
he performeth his promise, and 3. from

4.

thence the tediousnesse of delay, 4. The

5.

many troubles of life in our way, 5. The

6.

great opposition we meet with in the

7.

world, 6. and scandalous times even
from them that are in great esteem for

Religion, 7. together with the untoward-
nesse of our nature in being ready to be

put off by the least discouragement. In
these respects there must be more than a

humane spirit to hold up the soul, and

carry

carry it along to the end of that which we wait for.

Cap. 1.
2.

But, if God be our God, that love which engaged him to bind himself to us in precious promises, will furnish us likewise with grace needfull, till we be possessed of them. He will give us leave to depend upon him both for happiness, and all sanctifying and quieting graces, which may support the soul till it come to its perfect rest in God. For God so quickens the hearts of his children, that with all, he makes them better, and fits for that which he provides for them. grow and joy goe together. O our God is the God of grace and peace, of such great as breed peace.

2. Cor. 13.

3.

As he is a God of love, may love itself to us, so a taste of his love, raising up our love is better than wine, full of nothing but encouragement, it will fetch up a soul from the depths of darkness, this grace quickens all other graces, it hath so much spirit in it, it will sweeten all conditions. Love enables us to wait, as Jacob for Leah seven years. Nothing is harder to love, it carries all the powers of the soul with it.

1. Cor. 13.

Rom. 7.

Gen. 29.
4.

2. As

Cyprian

2.

Ephes. 4.

3.

Ephes. 6.

Rom. 7. 3.

4.

1. As he is a God of hope, so by this grace as an anchor fastned in heaven within the velle, he stayeth the soule; that though as a Ship at Anchor, it may be tossed and moved, yet not removed from its station. This hope as cork, will keep the soul (though in some heavynesse) from sinking; and as an mallow beate off the blows, that they endanger not our life.

2. All God is a God of hope, so by hope of patience, which is a grace whereby the soule resigneth up it selfe to God in humble submission to his will, because he being God, as David in extremity vniuersally saith, *in the Lord is our God.* Patience brings comfort, because it brings experience with it of Gods owning of us to be his. The soul now and fenced with armour is prepared against all rubs and thornes in our way, so as we are kept from taking offence. All troubles we suffer, do but help patience to its perfect work, by subduing the unbroken sturdynesse of our spirits, when we feel by experience, we get but more blows, by standing out against God.

3. The Spirit of God (likewise) is a spirit of meeknesse, whereby though the soul

soul be sensible of evil, yet it moderates
 such distempers, as would otherwise rob
 a man of himself; and together with
 patience beareth the *gait* in possession of it
 self. It brayes murmurings and frettings
 against God or man. It lets and keeps
 the soul in tune. It is that which God
 (as he works; so he) much *delights in*,
 and sets a *prize* upon it as the chief or-
 nament of the soul. The *meek* of the earth
saith God; and are *blessed* in the day of his wrath.
 whereas high spirits that compell them-
 selves with *pride* as with a *whip*; think
 to *conquer* themselves by *the* which
 is their *flank*, are looked upon by God
 as *fair* *foes*. Meek persons will bow when
 others *beak*; they *magnify* when others
 are *pitched down*; and stand when others
 are *trampled upon*; the wings of *vainglorious*
 the *opprobrium* by *wedding*, and are Lords
 of all to selves, and other things else, more
 than as be *amquies* *foli* *in* *the* *bles-*
sings *of* *heaven* *and* *glorie* *and* *on* *these*
only. So like *in* *so* *decent* *and* *humble* *with* *our*
all *though* *needfull* *for* *a* *waiting* *condition*,
and *that* *we* *have* *in* *the* *God* *being* *able* *to*
give *the* *soul* *full* *satisfaction*. For out-
ward *things* *God* *knows* *how* *to* *use*

6433

Zeph. 2. 3.

Pfal. 73. I.

Mar. 5. 52

5.

If

Eph. 2

If our condition be not to our mind, he will bring our mind to our condition. If the spirit be soothed for the condition, it is never quieted, therefore God will leuell both. Those wants be well supplied that are made up with contentednesse, and with riches of a higher kind. [16] the Lord be our *shepherd*, we can want nothing. This lifteth the *wearie hands* and *feeble knees*, even under *chastisement*, wherein though the soul mouneeth in the sense of Gods displeasure, yet it dejoyceeth in his Fatherly caring as with a fathers loves. [17] But *patience* and *endurance* are true love & condition for the soul to rest in, therefore the Spirit of God raiseth in us a spiritual enlargement of joy. So much joy, so much light; and so much light, so much *weaning* of *darknesse* of *sin*. We see in nature how a little light will prevail over the thickest clouds of darkness, a little fire melts a great deal of drasse. The knowledge of God to beget God, brings such a light of joy into the soul, it drieth out dark uncomfortable conceits, as this light maketh light of him. If the light of *knowing* stand manifest, much more the light of joy arising from our

Psal. 23.

Heb. 12, 12

2. 5. d. p. 2

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

2. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

2.

our

Cap. 33.

21. 1007
10.

Afts. 7.

21. 1007
202009

our communion and interest in God. How can we enjoy God, and not joy in him? A soul truly cheerefull rejoyceth that God whom it loveth, should think it worthy to endure any thing for him. This joy often riseth to a spirit of glory, even in matter of outward abstinence; if the trouble accompanied with disgrace continue, *the spirit of glory rest upon us*, and it will rest so long, untill it make us more than Conquerors; even then when we seem conquered: for, not only the *cause*, but the *spirit* riseth higher, the more the enemies labour to keep it under, as we see in Stephen, *and which the way*. With this joy goeth a spirit of *courage* and *confidence*. What can daunt that soul, which in the greatest troubles hath made the great God to bee his own? Such a spirit daunts all defiance to all opposite power, setting the soul above the world, having a spirit larger and higher than the world, and seeing all (but God) beneath it, as being in heaven already in its heart. After this, and *David* had seen God in his answer, *and them*, how little did they regard the angry countenances of those angry Princes, that were in their times. the

Cap. 31.

Rom. 16.
20.Tertul. in
Apolog.

the terrors of the world : The courage of a Christian is not onely against sensible danger, and of flesh and blood, but against *principalities, and powers of darknesse*; against the whole *kingdome of Satan*, the god of the world, whom he knows *shortly shall be trodden under his feet*; Satan and his may for a time exercise us; but they cannot hurt us. True beleevers are so many *Kings and Queenes*, so many Conquerours over that which others are slaves to : they can overcome themselves in revenge; they can despise those things that the world admires; & see an excellency in *that* which the world sets light by; they can set upon spirituall duties, which the world cannot tell how to goe about; and endure that which others tremble to think of; and that upon wise reasons; and a sound foundation, they can put off themselves; and be content to be nothing, so their God may appear the greater; and dare undertake and undergoe any thing for the glory of their God. This courage of Christians among the *Romans* was counted *estrangely*; but they had not the power of the Spirit of Christ in them, which is ever strongest; when they are weakest

in

in themselves, they knew not the privy armour of proof that Christians had about their hearts, and thereupon counted their courage to be obstinacy.

Christ.

Some think the Martyrs were too prodigall of their blood, and that they might have been better advised; but such are unacquainted with the force of the love of God kindled in the heart of his child, which makes him set such a high price upon Christ and his truth, that he counts not his life dear unto him. He knows he is not his own, but hath given up himselfe to Christ, and therefore all that is his, yea if he had more lives to give for Christ, he should have them. He knows he shall be no loser by it. He knows it is not a losse of his life, but an exchange for a better.

Act. 20. 24

We see the creatures that are under us, will be courageous in the eye of their Masters, that are of a *superior* nature above them; and shall not a Christian be courageous in the presence of his great Lord and Master, who is present with him, about him, and in him? Undoubtedly he that hath seen God once in the face of Christ, dares look the grimest creature in the face, yea death it self under any shape.

2. 1. 1. 1.

The

Cant.

7.

42. 91. DA

Psal. 18.

The feare of all things flies before such a soul. Onely a Christian is not ashamed of his confidence. Why should not a Christian be as bold for his God, as others are for the base gods they make to themselves? Besides a spirit of *courage* (for establishing the soule) is required a spirit of *constancy*; whereby the soule is steered and preserved immoveable in all conditions; whether present or to come; and is not changed in changes. And why? but because the spirit knows that God on whom it rests is unchangeable; We our selves are as quick-silver unsettled and moveable; till the spirit of constancy fixe us. We see David sets out God in glorious terms, borrowed from all that is strong in the creature, to shew that he had great reason to be constant, and cleaving to him. *He is my rock, my buckler, the horn of my salvation, my high Tower &c.* God is a rock so deep, that no floods can undermine, so high, that no waves can reach though they rise never so high, and rage never so much. When we stand upon this rock that is *higher than we*, we may overlook all waves, swelling, and foaming, and break.

Cap. 33.

Rom. 8. 39

breaking themselves, but not hurting us. And thereupon may triumphantly conclude with the Apostle, That *neither height, nor depth shall ever separate us from the love of God.* Whatsoever is in the creature he found in his God, and more abundant; the soul cannot with an eye of *faith* look upon God in Christ, but it will be in its degree as God is *quiet and constant*, the spirit aimeth at such a condition, as it beholdeth in God towards it selfe.

This constancy is upheld by indeavouring to keep a constant sight of God, for want of which it oft fares with us, like men, that having a City or Tower in their eye, passing through uneven grounds, hills and dales, sometimes get the sight thereof, sometimes lose it, and sometimes recover it again, though the *Tower* be still where it was, and they neerer to it than they were at first. So it is oft with our uneven spirits; when once we have a sight of God; upon any present discouragement, we let fall our spirits, and lose the sight of him, untill by an eye of *faith* we recover it again, and see him still to bee where he was at first. The cherishing of

Cap. 34.

Psal. 73. 27

passions take away the sight of God, as clouds take away the sight of the Sun: though the Sun be still where it was, and shineth as much as ever it did. We use to say, when the body of the Moon is betwixt the Sun and us, that the Sun is eclipsed; when indeed not the Sun but the earth is darkned, the Sun loseth not one of its glorious beames. God is oft neere us, as he was unto *Jacob*, and we are *not aware of it*. God was neere the holy man *Asaph*, when he thought him farre off. *I am continually with thee* (saith he) *thou holdest me by my right hand*. *Mary* in her weeping passion could not see Christ before her, he seemed a stranger unto her. So long as we can keep our eye upon God, we are above the reach of sin or any spirituall danger.

CAP. XXXIIII.

Of confirming this trust in God. Sack it of God himselfe. Sins hinder not: nor Satan. Conclusion and Soliloquie.

§. 1.

BUt to return to the drawing out of our trust by *whining*. Our estate in this world

world is still to wait, and happy it is that we have so great things to wait for; but our comfort is, that we have not onely a *furniture of graces*, one strengthening another as stones in an arch, but likewise God vouchsafeth some drops of the sweetness of the things we *waite* for, both to encrease our desire of those good things, as likewise to enable us more comfortably to *waite* for them. And though we should dye waiting, onely cleaving to the promise with little or no taste of the good promised; yet this might comfort us, that there is a life to come, that is a life of sight and sense, and not onely of *taste* but of *fulnesse*, and that for *evermore*. Our condition here is to live by faith and not by sight, onely to make our living by faith more lively, it pleaseth God when he sees fit, to encrease our *earest* of that wee look for. Even here God waits to be *gracious* to those *that waite for him*. And in heaven Christ waits for us, we are part of his *fulnesse*; it is part of his joy that *we shall be where he is*, he will not therefore be long without us. The blessed Angels and Saints in heaven waite for us. Therefore let us be content as strangers, to wait.

Clp. 34.

2 Pet. 1. 5.

1st. John
1. 3.

1st. John
1. 3.

Psa. 16. ult.

Esa. 3. 18.

Eph. 1. 23.

John 17. 24.

1st. John
1. 3.

1st. John
1. 3.

1st. John
1. 3.

1st. John
1. 3.

1st. John
1. 3.

Esp. 34.

Psal. 116.

Heb. 4.9.

Rev. 14.

a while till we come home, and then we shall be for ever with the Lord; there is our eternall rest, where we shall enjoy both our God and our selves in perfect happinesse, being as without need, so without desire of the least change. When the time of our departure thither comes, then we may say as David, *Enter now my soul into thy rest.* This is the rest which remaineth for Gods people, that is worth the waiting for, when we shall rest from all labour of sin and sorrow and lay our heads in the bosome of Christ for ever.

It stands us therefore upon to get this great Charter more and more confirmed to us (that God is our God) for it is of everlasting use unto us. It first begins at our entring into covenant with God, and continues not onely unto death, but entreth into heaven with us. As it is our heaven upon earth to enjoy God as ours, so it is the very heaven of heaven, that there we shall for ever behold him, and have communion with him.

Degrees of
our propriety in
God.

Pro. 4.18.

1.

The degrees of manifesting this propriety in God are divers, rising one upon another, as the light cleares up by little and little till it comes to a perfect day. 1. As the ground

ground of all the rest, we apprehend God to be a God of some peculiar persons, as *favourites* above others. 2. From hence is stirred up in the soul a restless desire, that God would discover himselfe so to it, as he doth to those that are *his*, that he would *visit our souls* with the salvation of *his chosen*. 3. Hence followes a putting of the soul upon God, an adventuring it self on his mercy. 4. Upon this, God when he seeth fit, discovers by his spirit that he is *ours*. 5. Whence followeth a dependence on him as ours, for all things that may carry us on in the way to heaven. 6. Courage and boldnesse in setting our selves against whatsoever may oppose us in the way, as the three young men in *Daniel*, *Our God can deliver us if he will. Our God is in heaven, &c.* 7. After which springs a sweet spirituall security, whereby the soul is freed from slavish feares, and glorieth in God as *Ours* in all conditions. And this is termed by the *Apostle*, not onely *assurance*, but the *riches of assurance*. Yet this is not so cleare, and full as it shall be in heaven, because some clouds may after arise out of the remainder of corruption, which may somethings over-

Cap. 34.

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3.

4.

5.

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Dan. 3. So
Pla. 115. 3.

7.

Col. 2. 2.

Cap. 34.

cast this *assurance*, untill the light of Gods countenance in heaven for ever scatters it.

There being so great happinesse in this needenesse betwixt God and us, no wonder if Satan labour to hinder the same, by interposing the guilt and hainousnesse of our *sins*, which he knows of themselves will work a *separation*: But these upon our first serious thought of *returning*, will be removed. As they could not hinder our meeting with God, so they may cause a strangenesse for a time, but not a parting; a hiding of Gods countenance, but not a banishing of us from it. Peter had denied Christ, and the rest of the Apostles had left him all alone: Yet our Saviour after his *Resurrection* forgets all former unkindnesse, he did not so much as object it to them, but sends Mary, who her selfe had been a great sinner, as an Apostle to the Apostles, and then *presently*, to tell them that he was *risen*, his care would have no delay. He knew they were in great heaviness for their unkindnesse. Though he was now entred into the *first degree* of his glory, yet we see his glory made him not forget his poore Disciples. Above all he was most carefull of Peter, as deeper in sin than

John 20.

Cap. 34.

than the rest, and therefore deeper in sorrow. *Goe tell Peter*, he needs *more* comfort. But what is the message? that *I ascend not to my Father alone, but to your Father, not to my God onely, but to your God.*

And shall not we be bold to say so after Christ hath taught us, and put this claime into our mouthes? If once we let this hold go, then Satan hath us where he would, every little crosse then dejects us. Satan may darken the joy of our salvation, but not take away the God of our salvation. *David* after his crying sin of murther, prayes, *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*, this he had lost, but yet in the same *Psalme* he prayes, *Deliver me from blood O God, thou God of my salvation*; therefore whatsoever *sense, reason, temptation, the law, or guilt upon conscience* shall say, Nay however God himselfe, by his strange carriage to us may seeme to be, yet let us cast our selves upon him, and not suffer this plea to be wrung from us, but shut our eyes to all, and look upon God *All-gracious* and *All-sufficient*, who is the *Father*, the begetter of *comfort*, the *God the Creator of consolation*, not onely of things that may *comfort*, but of the

Psal. 51.

2 Cor. 1. 3.

Cap. 34.
Mi. 7. 18.

comfort it selfe conveyed through these unto us. *Who is a God like unto our God, that passeth by the sins of the remnant of his people?* This should not be thought on without admiration, and indeed there is nothing so much deserves our wonderment as such mercy, of such a God, to such as we.

Deu. 26. 18

Ps. 119. 28

Since God hath avouched us to be his peculiar people, let us avouch him; and since he hath past his word for us, let us passe our words for him that we will be his, and stand for him; and to our power advance his cause. Thus David out of an enlarged spirit saith, *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee, thou art My God, and I will exalt thee.* Whatsoever we engage for God, we are sure to bee gainers by. The true Christian is the wisest Merchant, and makes the best adventure. He may stay long, but is sure of a safe and a rich return. A godly man is most wise for himselfe. We enter on Religion, upon these terms, to part with our selves, and all, when God shall call for it.

§. 2.

God much rejoyceth in sinners converted, as monuments of his mercy, and because

because the remembrance of their former sins, whets them on to be more earnest in his service, especially after they have felt the sense of Gods love, they even burn with a holy desire of honouring him, whom before they dishonoured, and stand not upon doing or suffering any thing for him, but cheerefully embrace all occasions of expressing obedience. God hath more work from them than from others; why then should any be discouraged?

Neither is it sins after our conversion, that nullifie this claim of God to be *ours*. For this is the grand difference betwixt the *two* covenants, that *now* God will be mercifull to our sins, *if our hearts by faith be sprinkled with the blood of Christ*. Though *one* sin was enough to bring condemnation, yet the free gift of grace in Christ, is of *many* offences unto justification. And we have a sure ground for this; for the *righteousnesse* of Christ is Gods *righteousnesse*, and God will thus glorifie it, that it shall stand good to those that by faith apply it against their daily sins, even till at once we cease both to *live* and *sin*. For this very end was the Son of God willingly *made sin*, that we might be freed from

Cap. 34.
Ex ipso dolore suo cō-
puncti, inar-
descunt in
amore Dei.
Damina pre-
cedentia lu-
cria sequen-
tibus com-
pensant.
Greg.

Heb. 10. 22

Cap. 34.

from the same. And if all our sins laid upon Christ could not take away Gods love from him, shall they take away Gods love from us, when by Christs blood our souls are purged from them?

O mercy of all mercies, that when we were once his, and gave away our selves for nothing, and so became neither his, nor our own, that then he would vouchsafe to become ours, and make us *his* by such a way, as all the Angels in heaven stand wondring at, even his Sons not only taking our *nature* and miserable condition, but our *sin* upon him, that that being done away, wee might through Christ have boldnesse with God as *ours*, who is now in heaven appearing there for us, untill he brings us home to himselfe, and presents us to his Father for *his* for ever.

Think not then only that we are Gods and he *ours*, but from what love and by what glorious means this was brought to passe. What can possibly disable this claim, when God for this end hath founded a covenant of peace so strongly in Christ, that sin it self cannot disanull it? Christ was *therefore* manifest, that hee might

Joh. 3. 5, 8

Cor. 34.

might destroy this greatest work of the devil. Forgiveness of sins now is one chief part of our portion in God. It is good therefore not to pore and plod so much upon sin and vilenesse by it, as to forget that mercy that rejoyceth over judgement. If we once be Gods, though we drink this deadly poyson, it shall not hurt us. God will make a medicine, an antidote of it; and for all other evils, the fruit of them is by Gods sanctifying the same, the taking away sin out of our natures; so that lesser evils are sent to take away the greater. If God could not over-rule evils to his own ends, he would never suffer them.

Mar. 16. 18

¶ 3.

I have stood the longer upon this because it is the one thing needfull, the one thing we should desire, that this one God, in whom, and from whom is all good, should be ours. All promises of all good in the new covenant, spring first from this, that God will be ours, and we shall be his. What can we have more? and what is in the world lesse that will content us long, or stand us in any stead, especially at that time when all must be taken from us? Let us put up all our desires for all things

Jer. 32.

Cap. 34.

things we stand in need of, in this right we have to God in Christ, who hath brought God and us together; he can deny us nothing, that hath not denied us himselfe. If he be moved from hence to do us good, that we are *his*, Let us be moved to fetch all good from him, on the same right that he is *ours*.

Job 34. 29

The perswasion of this will free us from all pusillanimity, lowlinesse, and narrownesse of spirit, when we shall think that nothing can hurt us, but it must break through God first. If God *give quietnesse*, who shall *make trouble*? If God be with us, who can be against us? This is that which puts comfort into all other comforts, that maketh any burthen light: This is alwayes ready for all purposes: Our God is a present, and a seasonable help. All evils are at his command to be gone, and al comforts at his command to come. It is but *goe comfort*, *goe peace* to such a mans heart, cheere him, raise him; *goe salvation*, rescue such and such a soul in distresse. So said and so done presently. Nay, with reverence be it spoken, so far doth God passe over himself unto us, that he is content himselfe to be commanded by

by us. Concerning the works of my hands
command you mee: lay the care and charge
of that upon me. He is content to be out-
wrestled, and over-powered by a spirit of
faith, as in *Jacob*, and the *woman of Ca-
naan*, to be as it were at our service. He
would not have us want any thing where-
in he is able to help us. And what is there
wherein God cannot help us? If Chri-
stians knew the power they have in hea-
ven and earth, what were able to stand
against them? What wonder is it if *faith*
overcome the world, if it overcomes him
that made the world? that faith should bee
Almighty, that hath the Almighty him-
selfe ready to use all his power for the
good of them to whom he hath given the
power of himselfe unto. Having therefore
such a *living fountaine* to draw from, such
a *center* to rest in, having al in *one*, and that
one *Ours*, why should we knock at any
other doore? we may goe boldly to God
now, as made *ours*, being *bone of our bone*, and
flesh of our flesh. We may go ^{*} more com-
fortably to God, than to any *Angel* or
Saint. God in the second person hath
vouchsafed to take *our nature* upon him;
but not that of *Angels*. Our *God*, and our

Man

Cap. 34.
ll. 45. 46.

* Tuus &
jucundus
loquer ad
meum Je-
sum quam
ad aliquem
sanctorum
Dei, &c.
Quod ego
sum, fieri
dignatus est
Deus, non
factus est.
quod angelus.

Cap. 34.
*sed curiam
 Dei sui, Dei
 tui, preces-
 sit Deus tu-
 us homo tu-
 us, tunica
 tuam induit,
 illic assidue
 pro nobis
 interpellat.*
 Aug.
 Heb. 5. 1.

Man, our God-man is ascended into the high court of heaven to his and our God, clothed with our nature. Is there any more able and willing to plead our cause, or to whom we may trust business with, than he, who is in heaven for all things for us, *appearing to God?*

It should therefore be the chief care of a Christian, upon knowledge of what he stands in need of, to know where to supply all. It should raise up a holy shame and indignation in us, that there should be so much in God, who is so neere unto us, in Christ, and we make so little use of him. What good can any thing do us if we use it not? God is ours to use, and yet men will rather use shifts and unhallowed policies, than be beholding to God, who thinks himself never more honoured by us, than when we make use of him. If we beleeve any thing will do us good, we naturally make out for the obtaining of it. If we beleeve any thing will hurt us, we study to decline it. And certain it is, if we beleeved that so much good were in God, we would then apply ourselves to him, and him to our selves; whatsoever virtue is in any thing, it is conveyed by application

application and touching of it; that where-
by we touch God, is our *faith*, which ne-
ver toucheth him, but it drawes virtue
from him; upon the first touch of faith,
spirituall life is begun. It's a bastard in na-
ture, to beleefe any thing can worke up-
on another without spirituall or bodily
touch. And it is a Monster in Religion, to
beleefe that any saving good will issue
from God, if we turn from him, and shut
him out, and our hearts bee unwilling.
Where unbeliefe is, it bindes up his pow-
er. Where *faith* is, there it is between
the soul and God, (as betwixt the iron
and the Loadstone) a present closing and
drawing of one to the other. This is the
beginning of *eternall life*, so to know God
the Father, and his Son Christ, as thereby
to embrace him with the armes of *faith*
and *love*, as *ours*, by the best title he can
make us, who is truth it selfe.

John 17.4

Since then our happinesse lies (out of
our selves) in God, we should go out of our
selves for it, and first get into Christ, and
so unto God in him; and then labour by
the Spirit of the Father and the Son, to
maintain acquaintance with both, that so
God may be *ours*, not onely in covenant,
but

Cap. 34.

Job 22. 28

but in *Communion*, hearkning what he will say to us, and opening our spirits, disclosing our wants, consulting and advising in all our distresses with him. By keeping this acquaintance with God, *peace and all good is conveyed to us.*

Thereafter as we maintain this communion further with him, we out of love study to please him, by exact walking according to his commands, then we shall feel encrease of peace as our care encreaseth, then he will *come and sup with us*, and be free in his refreshing of us. Then he will *shew* himselfe more and more to us, and *manifest* still a further degree of presence in joy and strength, untill communion in grace, ends in communion in glory.

But we must remember (as *David* doth here) to desire and delight in God *himself*, more than in any thing that is Gods; It was a signe of *S. Pauls* pure love to the Corinthians, when he said, *I seek not yours, but you.* We should seek for no blessing of God so much as for himselfe.

What is there in the world of equal goodnes to draw us away from our God? If to preserve the dearest thing we have in the world, we break with God, God will take

take away the comfort we look to have by it, and it will prove but a dead contentment, if not a torment to us. Whereas if we care to preserve communion with God, we shall be sure to find in him, whatsoever we desire for him, *honour, riches, pleasures, friends, all*; so much the sweeter, in how much we have the more immediately from the spring head. We shall never find God to be our God more, then when for making of him to be so, we suffer any thing for his sake. We enjoy never more of him than then.

At the first we may seek to him, as rich to supply our wants, as a Physician to cure our souls and bodies, but here we must not rest till we come to rejoyce in him as our friend, and from thence rise to an admiration of him for his own excellencies; that being so high in himself, out of his goodnesse would stopp down to us. And we should delight in the meditation of him, not onely as good to us, but as good in himself; because goodnesse of bounty springs from goodnesse of disposition, *he delighteth in his ease, he is good.*

A naturall man delighteth more in Gods gifts, than in his grace. If he desires grace,

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Dona Dei
sine Deo.

it is to glorie himselfe, not in graces, making him like unto God, and issuing from the first grace the free favour of God, by which means men come to have the gifts of God which God himselfe. But also, what are all other goods without the chief good, which are but as flowers, which are brought planting, in cherishing and growing, but ~~the~~ in enjoying the sweet taste of them. David therefore in God himselfe, has cast for nothing in the world, but what he may have with his favour, and what ever else he desires, he desires onely that he may have the better ground from whence to praise his God. *How our souls are saved*
 The sum of all is this, *The flesh is filled*
with children in this world; it is full of
the variety of tribulations; where in they con-
sist of many flesh and spirit; every
principle hath its down and proper work-
ings. They are sensible as flesh and blood,
they are sensible of discouragement as
sinful flesh and blood; but they rise over
themselves as having a higher principle
(Gods spirit) above flesh & blood in them.
 In this conflicting state, every princi-
 ple labouring to maintain it self, yet long-
 by

by the help of his Spirit in buckling and
strengthening his own working, gets
the better, keeping nature within bounds,
and suppressing corruption. And thus the
soul (so far as it is spiritually) doth by ga-
thering it selfe to it selfe; and by reasoning
the case so far, till it concludes; and joyne
upon this issue; that the onely way to at-
tain sound peace, is when all other means
faile; to trust in God. And then upon he
lays a charge upon his soul to do so it be-
ing a course grounded upon the highest
reason; even the unchangeable goodnesse
of God; who out of the riches of his mer-
cy, having chosen a people in this world;
which should be to the glory of his mercy;
will give them matter of shewing forth his
praise; by shewing some tokens of good
upon them; as being those on whom he
hath fixed his love; and to whom he will
appeare not onely a *Servant*; but *salvator*
of it selfe. *Nothing but salvation*; as the
Sun is nothing but light; for whatsoever
proceeds from him to them; tends to fur-
ther salvation. All his wayes towards
them lead to that; which wayes of his
thought for a time they are secret; and not
easily found out; yet at length God will

Cap 34.

be wonderfull in them, to the admiration of his enemies themselves, who shall be forced to say, God hath done great things for them; and all from this ground, that God is *our God in covenant*: which words are a stone that rule and guide the whole text. For why should we not be *disquieted* when we are disquieted? Why should we not be *cast down* when we are cast down? Why should we *trust* in God as a Saviour; but that he is *our God*, making himselfe so to us in his choicest favours: doing that for us, which none else can do, and which he doth to none else that are not in in a gracious manner. This blessed intercourse and intercourse betwixt Gods Spirit and our spirits is the hidge upon which all runs: without this, no comfort is comfortable, with this, no trouble can be very troublesome. Without this assurance there is little comfort in Soliloquies, unlesse, when we speak to our selves, we can speak to God as *our God*. For in desperate cases, our soul can say nothing to it selfe, to still it selfe, unlesse it be suggested by God; Discouragements will appeare greater to the soul than

than any comfort, unless God comes in
to ours.

See therefore *David's* art, he demands
of himselfe why he was so cast down?
The cause was apparent, because there
were troubles without, and terrours with-
in, and none to comfort. Well, grant
this saith the Spirit of God in him, (as the
worst must be granted) yet saith the Spirit,
Trust in God. So I have.

Soliloquie.

Why then, wait in trusting. *Light is
sowne for the righteous*, it comes not up on
the sudden, we must not think to sow and
reap both at once. If trouble be length-
ned, lengthen thy patience.

What good will come of this? God
will wait to doe thee that good,
for which *thou shalt praise him*, he will
deale so graciously with thee, as he will
deserve thy praise, he will *show thee his sal-
vation*. And new favours will stirre thee
up to sing new songs. Every new recovery
of our selves or friends, is as it were a new
life, and ministers new matter of praise.
And upon offering this *sacrifice of praise*
the heart is further enlarged to pray for
fresh blessings. We are never satter to pray,
than after praise.

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But in the meane time, I hang down my head, whilest mine enemies carry thee aloft high, and my friends stand aloofe.

God in his owne time (which is best for thee) will be the *saluation of thy countenance*. he will *compass thee about with songs of deliuerance* and make it appeare at last, that he hath care of thee.

But why then doth God appeare as a stranger to me?

That thou shouldest follow after him with the stronger faith and prayer, hee withdrawes himselfe; that thou shouldest be the more earnest in seeking after him. God speakes the sweetest comfort to the heart in the wilderness. Happily thou art not yet low enough, nor purged enough. Thy affections are not thoroughly crucified to the world; and therefore it will not yet appeare that it is Gods good will to deliver thee. Were thou a fit subject of mercy, God would bestow it on thee.

But what ground hast thou to build thy selfe so strongly upon God?

He hath offered, and made himselfe to be [My God] and so hath shewed himselfe

himselfe in former times; And I have made him *My God*, by yeelding him his Sovereignty in my heart. Besides the present evidence of his blessed Spirit, clearing the same, and many peculiar tokens of his love, which I daily doe enjoy: though sometimes the beames of his favour are eclipsed. Those that are *Gods*, besides their interest and right in him, have oft a sense of the same even in this life, as a fore-taste of that which is to come. To the scale of *grace* stamped upon their hearts, God super-adds a fresh scale of joy and comfort, by the presence and witness of his Spirit. And shewes likewise some outward token for good upon them, whereby he makes it appear, that *hee hath set apart him that is godly for himselfe, as his own.*

Thus wee see that discussing of objections in the consistory of the soule, settles the soule at last. *Faith* at length silencing all risings to the contrary. All motion tends to rest, and ends in it. God is the center and resting place of the soule, and here *David* takes up his rest, and so let us. Then whatsoever times

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come I wee are sure of a hiding place
and Sanctuary.

FINIS

Psalm 125.
Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, nei-
ther shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the
Olive shall faile, and the fields shall yeeld no
meat, &c. yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will
trust in the God of my salvation.

P s a l. 91. 1, 2.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the
most High, shall lodge under the shadow of the
Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my
refuge, and my fortresse. My God, in him will
I trust.

P s a l. 73. 26.

My strength and my heart faileth, but God
is the strength of my heart, and my portion for
ever.

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